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GST INCLUSIVE

Chicken Pox is Okon's last hope



Adelaide City's impressive striker, Alex Moreira tangoes with Sydney United's Ante Deur on Sunday night at the Sydney United Sports Centre. The game, which ended 1-1, was marred by the sending-off of two players.

While Australia's world number one tennis star, Lleyton Hewitt is battling a chicken pox epidemic in a desperate bid to appear in next week's Australian Open in Melbourne, national team skipper and Middlesbrough midfielder Paul Okon declared over the weekend that the illness might be the only thing left to save his career at the English premiership club.

In the words of a frustrated Okon, 'In my current situation, I don't feel that I've been given any chance at all. For me to play for Middlesbrough the whole squad would have to come down with chicken pox before Steve McLaren would even consider me,' the 29-year-old moaned.

'It's very frustrating, especially when you work day in and day out towards playing on the weekend but nothing ever happens.'

Okon, who returned from leading his country in a failed 2002 World Cup campaign against Uruguay in November last year, has been forced to watch from the sidelines all season as McLaren has repeatedly overlooked him in a new-look Middlesbrough side.

Even before the World Cup debacle, Okon's fate in the Middlesbrough had been all but sealed, but hopes that a fruitful World Cup qualifying campaign would either convince McLaren to give him a second chance or open the doors for other offers elsewhere were sadly ended by the Uruguay misadventure.

Now, hardworking Okon has all but given up on ever being given the chance to revive his stalled career at Middlesbrough.

Despite his travails, Okon has persevered at

the Midlands club, putting in the hard yards at training in a determined bid to make McLaren have a change of heart — all to no avail.

With last week's outburst, Okon might have reached the end of his tether and is now prepared to confront the situation head-on and take matters into his own hands.

On the swirling controversy over the reappointment of national manager, Frank Farina, Okon passed a vote of confidence in the man who had also stuck by him in his hour of need.



Paul Okon: "In my current situation, I don't feel that I've been given any chance."

'I think Frank handled it ... well (coaching Australia) and he will have learned a lot from being in charge over the past two years'.

'Frank could do with some ... help though. If he feels that it would benefit him then I don't see why someone can't come in and take a senior job. The problem is in finding someone who can come in and have the game at heart rather than someone taking on a job for their personal glory'.

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I'm sick of the rumours — Emerton

Australian international and Dutch-based Brett Emerton is fed up with all the transfer speculation that has surrounded him for about a year now and says he is being distracted.

"It's destabilising...all this talk. My aim is to concentrate on football and to help Feyenoord win the championship this season." The transfers rumours have become so heated and sustained that the 24-year-old star was said to be worth hair-raising sums in the range of \$US20million.

Brett Emerton is now almost sure of moving to the English Premiership next season after his Dutch club, Feyenoord declared that he won't be in Holland after the current season.

Despite the fact that he still has two whole years on his contract, club chairman Jorien van den Herik admitted recently that Emerton would be sold at the end of the season.

Emerton has been forever linked with transfers to Leeds

United, where his Aussie teammates Harry Kewell and Mark Viduka both play, as well as other English clubs such as Liverpool, Arsenal and Newcastle.

On holiday in Sydney, last week with the Dutch Eredivisie (first division) on a two-week winter break, Emerton hopes a deal will materialise at the end of the day to quash all the speculation and firmly decide where he will be playing at the start of the next season. "If a deal happens, it happens," Emerton said.

"It's no secret that I want to play in England but that's being left to my manager to sort out and I want to concentrate on football."

Emerton has managed only two two goals in 17 games for the club before the mid-season break, which however helped in leaving the club in second position. Emerton will be keen to help his team close the one point gap behind leaders Ajax Amsterdam when the season resumes on January 25.



Brett Emerton (right): "It's destabilising ... all this talk."

VIALLI WANTS OKON AT WATFORD

By Emma Nwaneri

English Division One side, Watford were the latest club last week to show interest in Australia's national skipper, midfielder Paul Okon as the 29-year-old was linked with a move there.

The Hornets, as they are known, were reportedly monitoring Okon as their Italian manager Gianluca Vialli is said to be keen to hire his services for the rest of the season. Vialli has reportedly maintained a long-term interest and relationship with Okon, which started from both men's spell in the Italian Serie A in the late 90s. Okon was at Lazio then, when Vialli was inspiring Turin giants, Juventus to a European Champions League triumph in 1997.

Okon's future at the Riverside Stadium has remained in serious doubt, after a trouble-strewn 18 months, especially with the coming of current manager, Steve McClaren.

Estwhile manager Bryan



Gianluca Vialli: Helping out?

Robson brought Okon to the club on a free transfer from another Italian club, Fiorentina, but injuries hampered much of his first campaign, although later under Terry Venables' spell as manager he excelled in a deep-playing sweeper role.

McClaren has however only used the Australian intermittently and the player's decision to put country before club in recent months has not helped his case for first team shirt. McClaren has instead persevered with new players brought in at the start of the season, who have also helped Boro to a respectable 15th spot in the premiership after a rather slow start to the season.

Okon is out-of-contract at the end of the season and is keen to decide his future over the next month, but it seems certain that the midfielder-cum-defender will be told he can leave.

If Watford eventually pursue their interest, the club is unlikely to hold onto the 29-year-old and will likely be demanding a small fee from any interested buyer.



Paul Okon: Attracting interest from Watford.

Corry caught in bush blaze

Wollongong Wolves' coach Ron Corry had a nightmarish Christmas experience on the South Coast of New South Wales last week.

He and his family were amongst the hundreds of people forced to evacuate their homes and converge at the Sussex Inlet RSL as bush fires

threatened to engulf them over the New Year Day period.

The scary situation forced the hardworking Corry to miss the team's first training session of the year in Wollongong and raised real question marks over his very presence at the Wolves' crucial home game against visiting Northern Spirit over the weekend.

Assistant coach Stuart Beedie however took over the reins in Corry's absence and oversaw training throughout last week as the Wolves sought to build on an impressive end-of-year 3-1 pounding of South Melbourne in December just before the Christmas break.



Ron Corry: Stranded.

League Champions Coming To Marconi Stadium

By John Economos

MARCONI on Saturday night locks horns against the revitalised current League Champions, the Wollongong Wolves at the Marconi Stadium.

Although this will be the second consecutive home

match for Marconi, coach Lee Sterrey was left sceptical to say the least last Saturday night.

Despite Marconi having just defeated the visiting South Melbourne by 1-0, Sterrey was left spitting chips.

"I was happy with the result, but let me tell you that, that was our worst performance of the season.

"The preparation was as best as we could have made it, including a heavy (well-grassed) pitch. Yet it was we that struggled on it-they

(South) didn't.

"Our overall our intensity left a lot to be desired as we didn't control the game from the back," Sterrey fumed.

However last night Sterrey had mellowed a little somewhat and stated to ABSW: "Look, after the Christmas break, a lot of teams are left struggling but now I feel we've gotten rid of the cobwebs.

"As far as Wollongong is concerned, don't discount them for a moment. They have a quality squad and don't deserve to be in ninth position," evaluated Sterrey.

Marconi's central marker and captain Dominic Longo will be playing his 200th game in the NSL.

Wollongong, League champions for the past two seasons, after a poor first half of the League has bounced back strongly with two wins from

their last two outings.

These two consecutive victories have bounced the Wolves up the League ladder from second last and into ninth spot.

Last Friday night at the WIN Stadium against the visiting Northern Spirit, the Wolves nailed down all three precious League points when their ace-marksman Stuart Young came off the bench to score the winner nine minutes from the bell with an incredible goal.

Gathering a flat cross from left mobile midfielder Naum Sekulovski, the super marksman hit the target with a lightning, unorthodox ankle-twisting shot that left the Spirit goalie completely off-balance.



STUART YOUNG: Wollongong's super marksman.



ALEX BROSQUE: Marconi's teenaged striker.

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The University of New South Wales wishes to invite any interested players to trial for U19's, U21's and First Grade.

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Commencing Wednesday 23rd January 2002 7pm at Little Bay Sporting Complex — Anzac Pde, Little Bay University of New South Wales is also seeking a senior level Goal Keeping Coach.

For more information please contact TROY COOK on 0412 069 068 or troy.cook@student.unsw.edu.au

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Contact: Martin 0409 891 066

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Marconi's Manager
Lee Sterrey.



Michael Turnbull



Dominic Longo



John Maisano



Stuart Young



Dean Anastasiadis



Wollongong Wolves'
Manager Ron Corry.

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The Good Oil ... The Good Oil ...

WILD red-hot and out of control massive bushfires over the past 16 days have left vast areas of NSW totally devastated.

Last Sunday night at the Croatian Sports Centre, a red-hot goal by Sydney United's brilliant striker and captain, Ante Milicic, instantly pulled his team out of the fire.

It was a stupendous goal. Having fallen behind in the 31st minute through a goal scored by Adelaide City's striker Alex Moreira, five minutes after the break Ante 'balanced the books' with his scorching long-range missile.

From wide on the left and some 27 metres out, Milicic blazed a right-footed scorching outswinging rocket that burned its way into the top left corner of the target.

This was Milicic's seventh League goal of the season and earned his side a valuable 1-1 draw.

Sports Centre.

Last Sunday night in the match Sydney United against Adelaide City, the game from a technical angle was a real pleasure to watch.

Both teams soon settled down to a technical passing game.

The reason?

A splendid, perfectly-flat and laboriously manicured playing surface they all had to work on.

Throughout the game we saw repeated quality flat passes.

Short and long balls were being perfectly passed from player to player. Very few aerial, Lotto balls were fired by either side.

The longer the match went on, the more confident both sets of players became with their passes, knowing the ball would run 'true'.

There's nothing more pleasurable than to see a deep-lying midfielder lash a long flat, defence-splitting through-ball to a striker, that

the late 60s and early 70s with Sydney Croatia and fully appreciates the benefits of a good 'wicket'.

What a shame the NSL doesn't have another 12 such dedicated 'Gilligans' on their payrolls.

'Gilligan', please take a huge bow.

Sydney United this Sunday is again at home, this time to the Olympic Sharks who'll feel like fish out of



By John Economos

left defender Fausto De Amicis remain as the veteran members of the squad.

♦♦♦♦



MEHMET DURAKOVIC: South's classy marker.

water, and will be stunned by this classy, grassy pitch.

The Sharks when they're at home, (Toyota Park), have to be content to 'bat' on a heavily sandy-based pitch

♦♦♦♦

PAUL TRIMBOLI, South Melbourne's mercurial strike-captain, hopes that he will be back in action within at least three to four weeks.

'Trimmers' badly injured his posterior ligament which cannot be surgically repaired.

"It's something that an operation can't fix," Trimboli stated to 'Good Oil' last Saturday night at the Marconi Stadium.

"I just have had to be patient and build up the muscles around the knee and wait till it heals itself.

"It's been a bother really but what can you do.

"In all honesty, over all my playing years I've been lucky to have had escaped any type of serious injuries till now," ended this brilliantly talented player.

South's coach Eddie Krncevic has lost at least eight players from the squad that last season won the Minor League Championship and has been forced to upgrade a stack of inexperienced teenagers to fill the void.

Classy central marker Mehmet Durakovic plus

With a stack of injuries plus a multitude of departees from last season, Krncevic was forced to field at least four inexperienced teenagers in his starting line-up as well as having another four youngsters on the bench.

"It's like a kindergarten around the place these," jest-ed Trimboli.

In the meantime Trimboli, (a qualified Accountant), and to his credit, although finding his long lay-off rather taxing, has had to balance out the pitch-training sessions he's missed with arduous physical exercises in the gym.

♦♦♦♦

Sydney Agents, MARCONI TRAVEL, as from next week will have special World Cup Finals preferential travel packages to go on sale.

The packages include air-fares, accommodation, transfers plus Cup match tickets to all games involving Italy, both Semi-finals plus the Final itself.



MICHAEL THEOKLITOS: The King's heroic match-winning custodian last Friday night against the Olympic Sharks.

Sydney Office on (02) 9728 1900.

♦♦♦♦

MICHAEL THEOKLITOS, (who?), the King's in-form goalkeeper, almost single handedly last

year old industrious midfielder and skipper, will this Sunday afternoon sign the biggest 'contract' of his life.

No, it's not another contractual document with his



STEVE PANOPOULOS with his vivacious Brazilian fiancée, ANDREA CIMINELLI who are getting married this Sunday, at East Malvern, Victoria.

Priority listings open as from this week.

Further inquiries to detailed questions can be made by contacting the

Friday night grabbed his team's first home win in Auckland whilst simultaneously denying the Olympic Sharks victory.

Easily Man Of The Match, the courageous Theoklitos made four point-blank stops that plunged the mobile and dominating Sydney team to a 2-1 loss.

Theoklitos in the first session denied joy to both Tommy Pondeljak and Lindsay Wilson by blocking their on-target shots.

Club.

In fact it will be one that will officially proclaim him to have married his vivacious Brazilian beauty, Ms Andrea Ciminnelli.

The wedding ceremony on Sunday will be held at the Saint Catherine Church in East Malvern.

For their honeymoon, the newly weds unfortunately will have to wait till the end of the NSL season.

The excited bride-to-be, Andrea, reluctantly con-



ANTE MILICIC: Sydney United's exceptional striker.

Whilst on the subject of the Sydney Croatian Sports Centre, without doubt, (and for years), this ground has the very best of playing surfaces in the nation.

The Soccer played today in the NSL, is far from being attractive.

One of the main contributing factors for this poor quality, are the badly prepared, bumpy, unevenly-cut surfaces that our players have to endure and operate on.

That's mainly why we see with monotonous regularity the ball being woofed up in the air via 'Route One' from player to player.

The players have quickly learnt not to trust the ball taking a 'true line' following their passes.

Not so at the Croatian

sets him off on a dangerous attack.

The Croatian Sports Centre has a lush green and pleasurable playing surface,



created by the Centre's meticulous curator, Ivan ('Gilligan') Rendolic.

'Gilligan' knows his onions and thoroughly knows just how to prepare a decent 'wicket'.

'Gilligan' himself was a useful creative midfielder in



PAUL TRIMBOLI: Hopes to be back in action within four weeks.



Seconds before the break, 'Theo' in full stretch turned around his post an on-target Troy Halpin free kick.

♦♦♦♦

STEVE PANOPOULOS, South Melbourne's 26

fessed to 'Good Oil' last night:

"It doesn't really matter as Soccer comes first right now.

"We'll just have to wait," she laughed.

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

WHAT surely, (by the end of this season), will prove to be the most valuable signing, is the one made last week by Sydney United when it snapped up magic midfielder Gabriel ('Chi Chi') Mendez.

The brilliantly gifted Mendez was inexplicably released last week by the Northern Spirit.

Surely this move would not have pleased the Harbour-side coach Mickey Hickman.

Gifted with both feet, possessing an exceptional degree of peripheral vision, Mendez is a classy, explosively creative player.

In fact today, Mendez would come very close to being the classiest playmaker in the entire League.

Last Sunday night at the Croatian Sports Centre, Mendez made his debut for Sydney United in the second session. This diminutive wizard almost won the match for his new Club when he rocked

the base of the left upright from 20 metres with a spectacular Brazilian-styled swinging free kick 12 minutes from the bell.

THE LEICHHARDT TIGERS' Under 20s team, the League Champions over the past two seasons in the NSW Premier League, will fly out of Sydney on Saturday January 19th bound for Italy to compete in one of Europe's most prestigious



By John Economos

Championship under Romeo.

At Viareggio, The Young Tigers have been bracketed with three Northern Italian teams, Padova, Piacenza and Vicenza.

The Sydney-based squad departs Saturday 19th of this month and returns to Australia on Wednesday night, the 6th of February.

This Friday night at Club Marconi, the Leichhardt Tigers' Youth team has planned a monstrous Fund-raising Dinner. After dinner the guests will see a special act that will entertain the



ZORAN MATIĆ: Adelaide City's master coach.

and Damian Mori again scored one apiece with defenders Jamie Harnwell and Matt Horsley also hitting the target.

The Glory's manager Mich D'Avray has done an excellent job since taking over the reins from Bernd Stange, having played 12, won 10 with a sole away-loss to the Olympic Sharks.

The Despotovski Mori combination has now accumulated a colossal 21 goals of the team's tally of 32.



GABRIEL ('Chi Chi') MENDEZ: A wonderful playmaker.



The Italian West coastal resort City of Viareggio.

Sydney University Women's Soccer Club



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This will be the 54th consecutive annual Tournament staged in the Tuscan coastal resort City of Viareggio, a City wedged on the Western shores of Italy, North-West of the historical town of Pisa.

Viareggio is an internationally famous centre as a resort and is dotted with elegant, superbly designed hotels.

This year the tournament has been expanded to embrace 40 club teams that will include 17 non-Italian sides.

Five teams from the Americas will see club sides competing from Argentina, Brasil, Colombia, Mexico and the USA.

Coached by the ambitious John Romeo, the Leichhardt Tigers Youth team currently leads its domestic competition and is well on course for its third consecutive League

packed auditorium, plus the Guest Speaker will be former Australian World Cup captain, John Warren.

ZORAN MATIĆ, Adelaide City's master coach, was laconic last Sunday night after his team's 1-1 away draw against Sydney United.

Matic stated: "It was a difficult game for both teams."

"As the game progressed it seemed as if all the players became scared at not losing the game."

When questioned on his opinion about the two Red Cards, both dished out to Sydney United players by referee Eddie Lennie, Matic cautiously drawled: "Decisions are decisions."

"I'd rather not make a comment."

"I've done so in the past and it has cost me plenty," Matic mused.

PERTH GLORY after 13 Rounds of the NSL has now streaked away to lead the NSL by a clear seven points ahead of second placed Newcastle United.

The Glory last Saturday

night stacked on another three League points to their account, crushing the visiting Brisbane Strikers 4-2 in front of a home crowd of almost 15,000.

That dynamic strike-duo, Bobby Despotovski

MICH D'AVRAY: The Glory's high flying manager.

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National Soccer League

Marconi Stallions South Melbourne

By Tim Caimakamis

In perfect conditions last Saturday night at the Marconi Stadium, a faithful crowd of 2,982 laboriously watched Marconi tenaciously hold on for a hard 1-0 win against the struggling young turks of South Melbourne.

A match of few highlights with both teams seemingly rusty after the Christmas break, both were guilty of poor ball control with a total disrespect for possession. "I'm happy with the result but very, very disappointed with our performance, our worst this year", fumed Marconi's straight-shooting coach, Lee Sterrey.

Marconi went into the battle minus striker Kevo Gulesserian enabling the 18-year old Alex Brosque to start and link up with fellow striker Norman Tome. As well, the return of steely midfielder Chad Gibson, back from overseas (Norway), for this game, he relished his much-needed game time when he came on in the second session.

South Melbourne's well-publicised stories of deficiencies in their squad since the beginning of the season were compounded last week by suspensions and a horrific injury toll. Central defender

Patrick Kisnorbo and striker Joe Bacak were suspended for this game whilst Liparoti and Sekulovski withdrew due to



Vaughan Coveny: His late introduction could not save South from defeat.

injuries.

With defender Clarkson plus captain and striker Paul Trimboli out with long injuries, South's coaching staff was forced to rush back into action, New Zealand international Vaughan Coveny to spark the attack from the right midfield spot.

"We had no choice. We had to get legs into him and were faced with the prospect of drafting another youth player into the team", lamented South's assistant coach Jeff Oliver on the gamble of playing Coveny, who hadn't touched a ball for two months due to a broken foot bone.

On the half hour mark, Marconi worked a well pre-planned freekick 30 metres out. Captain and central marker Dominic Longo slowly drifted out wide on the blind side, then suddenly with stealth made a very late run to the far post to distract the keeper whilst narrowly missing to connect with his head, a splendid Brenden Renaud curling free-kick that flashed just wide of the post.

Thirty eight minutes in, a through-ball by Renaud for midfielder dynamo John Maisano, sent him into the clear to bust the offside trap. With the advancing South goalie, Michael Petkovic looming out well off his line, Maisano veered slightly to his left to glide past Petkovic before calmly slotting home the all-important sole, but winning goal.

In the second session, Brosque displayed his high quality potential with a couple of attempts on goal. On 52 minutes, Brosque evaded his marker, cut

inside, only to have his shot well smothered by good keeping from Petkovic. Three minutes later, Renaud sent in a great cross from the left, but Brosque just failed to connect with his attempted diving header.

With much of the game tied up by an unproductive midfield, Marconi failed to finish off South Melbourne and almost paid the price a minute from fulltime.

South's lanky central marker Steve Iosofidis, hit the post as a mix-up flared up between Marconi's sweeper Angelo Costanzo and Renaud. Both let the ball bounce inside the six yard box box, as Iosofidis took advantage of the goalmouth scramble, only for his effort to rebound off the upright.

Marconi's better contributors were Alex Brosque, John Maisano, and Renaud, whilst teenaged striker Massimo Murdocca, skipper Steve Panopoulos and central marker Mehmet Durakovic, performed admirably for South Melbourne.

At the press conference a bemused Lee Sterrey admitted, "The pitch was heavy and we should have been used to it, but they (South) should have been struggling. But it was the other way around. We got the goal and we should have gone on with it from there, on our home ground," Sterrey snapped.

"I thought our first half was fairly poor. They (Marconi) beat our offside trap (only once), but in the end I thought



John Maisano: Slotted home the winner for Marconi.

we did enough to deserve at least a point," reflected Jeff Oliver.

Perth Glory Brisbane Strikers

By Richard Kreider

League leaders Perth Glory returned to their winning ways last Saturday by defeating top-six contenders Brisbane Strikers 4-2 and in doing so placed a daunting seven-point cushion between them and second-placed Newcastle United.

Previous encounters between these two sides have seen copious goals scored and this highly entertaining Round 13 fixture proved no exception.

Glory coach Mich d'Avray was full of praise for the way the Queenslanders approached the game at the intimidating Perth Oval, which contained 14,592 contented fans – the biggest attendance so far this season. "I've said this before, it takes two teams to play a game of soccer and credit must go to Brisbane. That is not patronising them, it's (acknowledging) that they have come here and played an attacking brand of soccer," said d'Avray.

"It just makes it so entertaining for everyone," he said. Whilst justifiably disappointed with the result, Brisbane boss John Kosmina was still able to pay tribute to his charges for the way they took the game to the powerful Perth side. "It comes down to being able to take your chances and the one Paul Foster missed in the fourth minute was one that can change games for you," said Kosmina.

"If we had scored first we could have gone on with it."

"So, we had to chase, but having

said that, I think we did very well," ended Kosmina.

D'Avray made two significant changes for the game, with midfielder Antonio Naglieri making what proved to be a satisfactory debut and seasoned wingback Scott Miller switched to a sweeper role in place of the suspended Craig Deans.

After Foster grazed Glory's left hand upright and had a weak shot easily claimed in the opening exchanges, the home side responded in the 10th minute through Damian Mori who



Brisbane Strikers supporters in the stands last Saturday against Perth Glory.

missed an even easier chance to score by volleying a quality cross from Matt Horsley centimetres past an upright with his not-so-popular left-foot.

Match captain Bobby Despotovski, who is currently playing with an extraordinary air of confidence, broke the deadlock after 19th minutes by chesting and volleying an accurate Shane Pryce centre past the left hand of ex-Everton goalkeeper

Jason Kearton. But just as Glory's euphoria subsided, Brisbane were back on level terms through former Glory forward John Carbone, who ran onto an Alagich back-heeled free-kick and released a sizzling 30-metre exocet, which rippled the inside side-netting past a startled Jason Petkovic.

Glory defender Jamie Hamwell gave his side a psychological advantage three minutes before the break by putting his side back in front with a powerful header to a Scott Miller left-side cross.

But the visitors collected a fortunate equaliser two minutes past the restart when Petkovic failed to hold a straightforward strike from Richie Alagich. The usually reliable custodian spilled the ball to Paul Foster, who scuffed his attempted chip, but which fortunately went to substitute team-mate Michael Baird who made no mistake in stabbing the ball into an open goal with his first touch of the match. "Jason was maybe at fault but he has been good value to us and probably worth about twelve to fifteen points a season to us," said d'Avray in defence of the Soccerroo goalkeeper.

The Perth side made it 3-2 just nine minutes further on when Despotovski cleverly lined up Horsley to drill home from close-range before Damian Mori added a fourth seven minutes from time by tucking away a Gary Faria across-goal header that came from a Horsley centre. Meanwhile, referee Simon Micallef gave a more than satisfactory performance throughout the ninety minutes, just days before Oceania's World Cup 2002 panel selection was to be chosen.

Sydney United Adelaide City Force

By Arvind Hickman

Sydney United hung on for a 1-1 draw with Adelaide City at the Sydney United Sports Centre last Sunday despite the Bravehearts being reduced to nine men.

Ante Milicic gave the 3,753 home crowd something to cheer about with a brilliant equaliser, but the supporters soon turned on referee Eddie Lennie when he produced two controversial red cards in the space of seven minutes.

Ante Moric was the first player to be ejected in the 73rd minute for manhandling referee Eddie Lennie while disputing a suspect handball by an Adelaide City defender in their penalty box.

Commins Menapi, having only played for 15 minutes after coming on as a substitute, was also shown a straight red in the 80th minute for a poorly timed tackle on Aurelio Vidmar from behind. In this reporters opinion Menapi was perhaps a touch unlucky as his tackle had no malice and didn't promote open studs in what was generally a clean game.

Despite their numerical advantage the Zebras couldn't break a determined United defence.

City Coach Zoran Matic later said that this was due to a lack of experience on his team's behalf.

"As the game progressed some of the younger kids were scared of

winning," he said.

"At home they would be much more adventurous but away we can't sit and wait in our zone.

"I knew it would be difficult (after the send offs) when they are prepared to fight, and we also played a lot to the youth. They're not going to win the game, not because of their ability but because they don't have the experience."

United coach Branko Culina was disappointed with the result and believes a lack of discipline cost his team.

"We came here to win and anything less than a win is a failure, that's the way I see it," he said.

"When you have got a ref who is



Commins Menapi: One of two players sent-offs by referee Eddie Lennie.

trigger-happy then you have to be smart enough not to give him any reason to do something like that. All in all I think the players have to realise that referees make mistakes, just like they do, and you just have to get on with it.

"If you include that (Moric send-off) and the goal that we conceded it was pretty undisciplined."

The Zebras' goal came against the run of play in the 31st minute when Carl Veart sent through a long ball and Alex Moreiera sprung the offside trap to beat keeper' Wilson Knezevic.

United had a chance to equalise a minute later when Milicic drew the keeper to the right side of the box, before cutting back to Kresimir Marusic who hit a weak shot.

The home team came close again in the 40th minute when Paul Bilokapic shaved the crossbar with a towering header from a corner.

Only five minutes after the restart Milicic scored an inspirational equaliser, hitting a curling shot from 25 metres out into the top left hand corner. Substitute 'keeper Daniel Godley didn't even move and the wonder strike lifted the home team.

New recruit Gabriel "Chi-Chi" Mendez came on early in the second for Marusic and played some nice touches including a sublime free kick that hit the inside left post before curling across the goal face and going out.

Another player deserving of a mention was NSL debutant Christian Cervenini, a product of United's youth team who impressed with some strong runs and plenty of energy off the ball.

The result leaves both teams on 11 points, in 10th and 11th positions respectively, and desperately in need for turn in form.

National Soccer League

Wollongong Wolves Northern Spirit

2
1

By Otto Bader

The brilliance of striker Stuart Young, coming on in the final 20 minutes, with a cheeky back heel scoring the winning goal after great preparation from man of the match Naum Sekulovski, skipping past three defenders, laying the ball on for Young who despite marked tight had the cool head to find the net.

Sekulovski scored the opening goal himself early in the first half after good work on the flank by overlapping defender Dino Mennillo who passed the ball, allowing the young striker room to turn and find the far corner of the net, out of reach for the keeper.

Spirit equalised with top finishing from established striker Pablo Cardozo, who received a deflected ball and unmarked, took his chance with a low shot finding the net, out of reach of the Wolves keeper.



Naum Sekulovski: Scored once and made another goal for the Wolves.

Wolves coach Ron Corry was quietly satisfied with some aspects of the match but said there is much more improvement to come to win more games.

The team used too many high and long balls, with neglecting passing the ball on the ground, keeping possession is important. The pace of the young forwards Sekulovski and Sharland is encouraging but they have still room to gain experience and learn to control the ball if under pressure. The finishing of Young was good and expected from the coach.

Mick Hickman, the coach of Northern Spirit was disappointment, saying they deserved more and he was under the impression his side dominated play but by making a couple of mistakes got punished by a hard working opposition.

He was satisfied that his boys gave him everything asked for, were chasing the ball well, with some good things coming from the whole team. That was the first game Northern Spirit lost in away games and they miss the top six, staying on 15 points, with the Wolves on 12 points now.

The match started with a bang when in the opening minute North striker Pablo Cardozo was given room to shoot just outside the goal area, his shot flashing past the upright to the relief of the Wolves defence. It was a warning for the home side to pay more attention to the ace marksman.

The first and only yellow card was issued to North No. 4 Noel Spencer, a former Wollongong player, after a rough tackle on Wolves youngster Greg Sharland. Otherwise no more cards issued despite some strong tackling from both sides.

The Wolves had the first few corners

but could not benefit anything from it. However in the 20th minute a moment of good play from Dino Mennillo allowed young striker Naum Sekulovski to use his speed to avoid defenders and find the net, no chance for the excellent North keeper Paul Henderson.

Play went on from end to end and for some passages North look dangerous but were a bit fortunate when striker Pablo Cardozo got hold of a rebound and beat the Wolves keeper with a low drive into the far corner of the net, the score level at the break 1:1. Actually the Wolves could have taken the lead again in the 43rd minute when the over-anxious speedster Naum Sekulovski was not cool enough to finish a great opportunity.

Overall the first half produce an entertaining game, a fair result to this stage. Ball passing went a bit astray and both sides lost a lot misdirected ball.

The second half started well for the Wolves, they really took the game to the opposition and were having much more possession. North never look dangerous enough to score and had to wait towards the final quarter to threaten the Wolves goal to find the keeper alert and the defenders working extra hard to keep them out.

The home team had several good shots at goal, pressing hard forward and at times had the opposition back pedalling, but could not find the target. Many shots went wide or over the bar. Paul Reid let one fly which was just tipped over the crossbar by the North keeper in the 75th minute.

Giant defender David Cervinski pushed forward on corners to use his physical presence to head on goal. When Stuart Young scored the eventual winner the game became alive with North trying hard to equalise and the Wolves defenders and mid field working overtime. But the home side defended well and did not look in danger to give up their advantage.

Parramatta Power Melbourne Knights

1
0



Melbourne Knights' Daniel Debevic (left) stops rampaging Parramatta striker Nick Orlic.

By Alan Clark

Parramatta Power continued Melbourne Knights' poor run at its Somers Street home with a narrow, but convincing 1-0 victory last Sunday.

In a game of few clear chances, Zlatko Arambasic slid home a John Bonavoglia cross from close-range, five minutes before the break.

"It was a disappointing result (given) our two wins previously. We wanted the win today to claim fourth spot," said assistant coach Luciano Trani after the game.

Parramatta coach David Mitchell was delighted to take the three points, as that meant Power would jump to fourth. "It's a big win for us. Melbourne Knights played attacking football (in the last two games). They're a good side. For us to come here and keep a clean sheet and the win cements us in fourth spot," he said.

Power got off to the better start when Steve Eagleton blasted goalwards from the edge of the area and forced a diving save from Martin John who was able to touch it onto the far-post. Amazingly, the ball then rebounded off John's head as it cannoned off the post, and only then out for a corner.

Knights were mounting some effective attacks of its own - perhaps the best opportunity falling for Daniel Vasilevski mid-way through the half.

Power's Steven Fitzsimmons

volleyed over after controlling with his chest to complete a fine move begun by Wayne O'Sullivan on Power's left. O'Sullivan squared the ball to Lapsanski who then found Fitzsimmons making a diagonal run to cut out the Knights defence.

Power's goal just before the break was in keeping with the balance of the game. Buonavoglia is both fast, and as a player of short stature, very hard to knock off the ball when in possession. He had shown his qualities throughout the game, but was best rewarded for them when he'd made all the running down the left to the bye-line, and crossing hard and low to where Arambasic only needed to bundle it over the line from close-range.

As the second half proceeded, it became clear that Power was more intent on retaining its lead, than extending it, funnelling players behind the ball whenever possession was lost to the Knights.

Try as they might, the Knights players could not find their way through the cluttered final third, and were always vulnerable to the counter-attack given Buonavoglia's pace.

"Parramatta decided they were in front and they were going to hold that result, and we weren't penetrating enough. If they drop off, we've got to be good enough to find shooting (opportunities) 25-30 metres from goal," said Trani. "We didn't shoot enough."

Football Kingz Olympic Sharks

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1

Finally, finally, under-pressure Football Kingz gave their long-suffering fans a timely New Year present last Friday by notching their first home win in three months. Luckless Olympic Sharks turned out to be the sacrificial lambs as they fell 1-2 to the Kingz at the Ericsson Stadium.

It still looked like another bitter day for the fans as they had to wait till the frantic dying minutes of the game to cheer a well-deserved home win for the Kingz.

The Kingz' new-look defence looked shaky as the game progressed after the late evening kick-off, but they managed to stop the Sharks with timely tackles and goalie Michael Theoklitos - fast earning a reputation for himself - played out of his skin to pull off four spectacular saves.

The corner tally of 12-0 to Olympic told the story of possession and for most part of the game, Paul Urlovic and Andy Vlahos were isolated up front.

In the 11th minute, Theoklitos got down quickly to block a shot by Tom Pondeljak and shortly after, he again parried a dangerous cross by Lindsay Wilson, which was cleared by his

grateful defenders.

Not until the 41st minute did the Kingz manage a first shot - a rather tame effort which was easily held by Sharks' goalie, Clint Bolton.

After a scoreless first half, the Kingz had their first real chance in the 51st minute. A fine freekick from Andy Vlahos found Paul Urlovic only for him to head wide.

But two minutes later the Kingz were in front. Another header, this time from Vlahos found George Goutzioulis who unleashed a trademark 22metre cracker that flew into the Sharks' net.

For the rest of the half, the Sharks dominated but could not find a way past impressive Michael Theoklitos in the Kingz' goal. At the other end, countless misses from John Markovski and the Kingz' wild shooting prevented any more goals until the 86th minute when deep playing Olympic sweeper, Ante Juric took matters in his hands to head home the equaliser.

The visitors' 87th minute equaliser brought back memories of yet-another re-enactment of the Kingz' penchant for throwing away victory at the crucial last minutes of games.

It was however not to be as Olympic faltered in the 88th minute when



Ante Juric: Grabbed a consolation goal for Olympic Sharks.

Andrew Durante undid all their evening's good work by turning a cross from Kingz' Jonathan Perry into his own net.

Four minutes of a harrowing injury time clearly prolonged the Kingz agony, but thanks to the Sharks' inaccuracy in front of goal, they survived. Durante's own goal completed the scoring but Theoklitos executed some late heroics to ensure a win for the homers.

The Kingz also had their goalkeeper to thank for keeping the game scoreless until halftime despite Olympic's domination of possession.



John Kosmina: "We have become a nation of event-watchers."

Kosmina on Brisbane Strikers, NSL, World Cup & Ron Smith

Anyone who knows Australian soccer would similarly agree how much of a contribution **JOHN KOSMINA** has made, ever since he scored the very first goal in the National Soccer League way back in 1977.

'Kossie', as he is affectionately known, made 289 appearances and scored 133 goals in the NSL on top of the 102 caps (45 goals) for his country. Apart from 1978 when he had a brief stint at English giants Arsenal (One league and two European appearances), he has been an integral part of the world game downunder, right up until his current duties as coach of the Brisbane Strikers.

Ultimately, he was inducted onto Soccer Australia's Hall of Champions honour board in 1999. Arguably, one of Australia's all-time talented netbusters, Kosmina talks to **RICHARD KREIDER** about the changing face of the world game downunder.

RK: What are your thoughts on where the NSL stands now, in terms of its popularity and quality compared to when you first played in 1977?

JK: In terms of popularity, it's a different ball game altogether. Back in 1977 the whole thing was new and fresh. The majority of the clubs were ethnic-based or membership-based as Nick Tana likes to put it, and because of the 'newness' and being the first sport in Australia to go national, there was a lot of interest. We had commercial television and a major sponsorship from one of the biggest companies in the world - Philips. I suppose if you use that as your benchmark, we've gone a long way backwards! In regards to the

quality, I think it is also down a bit; certainly when you compare it to 1977. There are a number of reasons for this; one is the amount of players now playing overseas, and another is a lack of quality imports. You look at the number of British players that came out in the sixties, the seventies and even into the early eighties. They were all good players. Now, they are virtually unaffordable given the money in the game in Britain.

RK: Who can forget the 40,000 plus fans at SunCorp Stadium in 1997 for the Strikers championship win. But why only a few thousand for Brisbane's home league matches since then?

JK: I was there that day, even though I was coaching in Newcastle at the time. That was a one-off - a major event. We have become a nation of event watchers and I think the media has got to take the blame for that. We have world championships of everything at the moment and this is partly why soccer is not looked at from a domestic point of view, but rather on an international viewpoint. We are world champions of rugby league, but you've got a handful of combined nations to make up the championship numbers. You've also got the same in cricket where we beat Sri Lanka, the Indians, West Indies, the Poms and New Zealand but it's not exactly what you call the whole world is it? I'm not being cynical here; I'm being dead-set honest. Australia are ranked 48th from 203 nations in soccer with FIFA and that's more of an achievement than being ranked number one out of

half-a-dozen nations. So, as I said, the media have got to have a look at how they go about presenting soccer. Sure, they will recognise your Kewell's and Viduka's but won't recognise the local talent.

RK: Are we expecting too much from the NSL, or is there room for improvement?

JK: I don't think you can expect too much and I think there is definitely room for improvement. How much is too much? You can expect too little! Really, we have got to stop making excuses. Someone or some group of people have got to put their hand up and say "I've been responsible," but no one seems to want to take any responsibility or be accountable for where soccer in Australia is at, at the moment.

RK: Are there any changes you would like to see - especially the number of clubs in the competition?

JK: It's difficult, but you could probably run a league of sixteen teams; although is it financially viable? Plus, we don't have that amount of players to spread around. So, maybe go back to a ten-team league provided there is fair and ethical discussion on which ten teams they may be. Twelve is probably a comfortable number too. I think given that most of the clubs are full-time, we certainly need to play more than 24 games in a season and a few finals along the way. However, I am still a believer in first past the post as being a sign of the most consistent team in the league.

Perth won the minor-premiership the season before, made the grand

final and were beaten; but were probably the best team over the 28 or so games. At the end of the day, I don't think we play enough games for a full-time competition per say. So, even if we had twelve teams, three rounds has got to be discussed where you are playing at least 30 odd games as well as the finals. You look at the top leagues in Europe; where they are playing forty to sixty games minimum.

RK: Is removing a Melbourne club the way to go?

JK: If anyone's got to go it's got to be a Sydney side. I think you need to have at least two Melbourne teams for that local rivalry element. With a population of three million, especially with the strong ethnic support base for soccer down there, I don't understand why they can't have two good teams. However, if you look at the history of the clubs that would more than likely survive; where they have been in the past, in terms of the heritage of the clubs, is that the road we want to keep walking down, or do we branch off onto a new path and start from scratch? If you do that, it's a hell of a move to kill off what at least is still breathing. We could probably do with another team up here in Brisbane although I think if you remodel the league to have two Brisbane teams from the outset it will be difficult.

RK: Would it help if NSL games have other forms of entertainment on the day?

JK: Entertainment is a funny thing Richard. Some clubs have

Alagich, John Carbone and Jason Kearton in goal who has given the team a bit more self-confidence. Up front Fernando Rech is an explosive player who can be a little bit hot and cold at times but when he's hot he's exceptionally hot. The thing that's made it difficult for him is that he's become a marked man. A number of teams have played man to man on him.

RK: You appear to have brought the best out of ex-Glory striker John Carbone. What have you changed about his game?

JK: Not a great deal. 'Carbs' probably needed a bit more belief in himself. To be honest, there are times when he needs a kick up the bum because he can be a bit 'inactive' but I've just been onto him about working for ninety minutes and he's really started to do that and it's paying dividends. He's scored some great goals for us and set a few others up. He's a quality player.

RK: You've played an impressive 102 times for the Socceroos, yet you are one of many that didn't make it to a World Cup Finals. Does that still cross your mind?

JK: Not really. I think there have been a number of reasons why we didn't qualify this time around but I'm not going to go into those because it would be very long-winded. It would also mean going over some old ground and maybe I would break some new. I don't think this is the forum to display my thoughts on it since I would be too open for what I feel. But I think the qualifying

against New Zealand and the Oceania group. Certainly the Confederation Cup and the French game at the MCG before the Uruguayan match was all well and good but they really didn't count for anything. They weren't a life or death situation as the World Cup games can be.

RK: World Cup aside, what games with the Socceroos gave you the most satisfaction?

JK: I enjoyed all my games. It was difficult times in those days but they were certainly fun and I got to see a lot of the world I wouldn't have seen otherwise. I suppose my debut game in June 1976 against Bologna of Italy was good because it was in front of my home crowd in Adelaide and I also got a bit of joy in my final game, which was at the 1988 Seoul Olympics where I scored the only goal against Nigeria that got the team into the quarter-finals.

RK: Do you have a particular coach that you admire?

JK: One person I'd mention would be Ron Smith. He was once based in Australia at the Institute of Sport for a number of years. Ron is a great coach of coaches and certainly a good coach of players as well. He is one I have had personal contact with but the other guys you see from a distance. However, I always keep a sharp eye for those on Pay-TV and the Internet just to hear what different coaches have to say. I don't look at them for a tactical or a football perspective, I look at their psychological point of view. Ninety

percent of the game is in the player's head because the head tells the rest of the body what to do. It gives you decisions on how you are going to touch a ball etcetera. So there are things that I look at from overseas not so much the training drills because you can make them up yourself, but it's how they deal with players that I'm interested in.

road is very difficult. It certainly isn't fair for us to have to first play in Oceania against nobodies and then have to finish up trying to qualify against the better teams from the South American Conference. Uruguay's preparation was far better than ours. They had 18 qualifying matches before they got to us. It's ridiculous to count the games

RK: Would it be fair to say Brisbane has been their own worst enemy for the past few years?

JK: Two seasons ago we started well and finished ninth and last season we started bad and finished bad. I think it had a lot to do with the off-field politics but there are none to deal with this season. The club has a licence in its own right so that there have been no battles for ownership or battles for anything else that could possibly affect the team. The squad is vastly different to that which we had two seasons ago and to a large extent last season. Consistency has been better; since I've been able to name the starting eleven for almost each of the ten games that we've played so far. Unlike last season, where I was only able to do that once or maybe twice. I wasn't making weekly changes for one or two personnel, it was three and four and sometimes five players out.

RK: What about the team's attitude?

JK: It is different; in fact it's probably more mature through the likes of Kris Trajanovski, Richie



Fernando Rech: "He is an explosive player."

I'm still learning — Spirit's John Hutchinson



Seen here in action against Newcastle, John Hutchinson believes Northern Spirit will be title contenders this season.

A stress fracture to his leg has kept Northern Spirit's young charge **JOHN HUTCHINSON** sidelined in recent weeks.

But, as the Spirit sit on the fringe of the top six, Hutchy's return is sure to add further spark to an engine room rejuvenated by this season's challenge. Under Coach Mick Hickman, the Spirit outfit boasts a mixture of experience and class within its ranks.

Amid New Year festivities, the tenacious Hutchy speaks to ABSW about his bad habits, hidden talents, and his 'Melrose Place' style apartment!!

DR: How would you describe yourself as a player?

JH: Still have a lot to learn.

DR: From what age have you been playing this great game?

JH: I have been playing since I was four. My Dad dragged me to training, and that's how it started. I played in the Morwell Pegasus youth team, before joining the Eastern Pride (formally known as Morwell Falcons) at the age of sixteen.

DR: What league do you rate as the world's best?

JH: The English league, especially Blackburn Rovers. My Dad's family comes from Newcastle, so they are big supporters of United.

DR: If you could play for any team in the world,

which one would it be?

JH: Newcastle, so I can play in front of my family back home in England.

DR: What makes Soccer such a popular sport around the world?

JH: The skill involved in the game. Players dribbling, and shooting...it's attractive. World class players light up the Soccer world. There are plenty more players out there, and the game will get bigger and bigger.

DR: Is there a Soccer player that you model your game on?

JH: Harry Kewell. He's ambitious when he gets the ball, and puts in 100% each time. I like to watch his game and learn.

DR: Will Spirit be Championship contenders this season?

JH: We will. We have a good team, with new players that have taken time to gel together. In the last 3-4 weeks our overall game has become better. If we stop conceding goals, we'll become contenders.

DR: What are the qualities of a good coach?

JH: A coach must be able to talk to his players and tell them what he wants. He must be happy and enthusiastic, and have good training methods and good tactics. A good coach will lead from the front, and show discipline if they step out of line. If he has this, it's a sign of a



By Daniela Raco

good coach.

DR: In one word describe Mick Hickman

JH: The man? Enthusiastic

The coach? Enthusiastic

DR: Who is the funniest character in the game today?

JH: Tony Sekulic. He dyed his hair a different colour every week down at Morwell.

DR: Who is the last person you would like to be stuck in an elevator with?

JH: Claudio Canosa, because I can't understand a word he's saying when he gets angry.

DR: If you could travel back in time, where would you go?

JH: To a beach in Hawaii and live there for the rest of my life...hopefully my parents are loaded so I can live off them.

DR: You were born and raised in Morwell, but you have made the move across to the Harbour City. Where do you call home?

JH: Morwell — that's where my parents live, my two sisters, and a two year old foster boy.

DR: You live in a Melrose

Place style apartment complex in the Sydney suburb of Dee Why, with other nearby tenants being teammates Lou Acevski, and Robert Trajkovski. Do you all car pool to training?

JH: Yes!! We have a designated driver every week. We work by a roster.

DR: Do you follow the AFL?

JH: No. I'm happy to get away from it. I don't mind the NRL.

DR: What is your favorite late-night snack?

JH: Anything chocolate.

DR: Which teammate could do with a new wardrobe?

JH: Simon Bell. He has come to training with some shockers. The shoes need improving as well. The brown shoes he wears with the team tracksuit don't do him any justice.

DR: Which teammate do you refuse to share a room with?

JH: Lou Acevski. He is deadly...for reasons I just can't explain.

DR: What is the best ingredient for a good night out?

JH: Hanging out with the boys from Dee Why, when I can get them away from their wives.

DR: Best hangover cure?

JH: KFC!!

DR: Which member of your squad is most likely to be caught dancing on a podium at a nightclub?

JH: Ryan Griffiths — he is the man!

DR: Which member of

your squad would top Cleo's most eligible bachelor list?

JH: Both the Griffiths boys — Adam and Ryan.

DR: It is important to have a balance to be able to play well on the park. What are some of John Hutchinson's off-field pastimes?

JH: Playing golf with Robert Trajkovski and Michael Cartwright. Lou Acevski tries to play... he scores about 150 for 18 holes!

DR: If you could have any supernatural power, what would it be?

JH: To know a woman's thoughts...like the guy in the movie "What Women Want".

DR: What cuisines can you whip up in the kitchen?

JH: I'm not a very good cook, but a cook a good chicken stir-fry seven days a week.

DR: Worst haircut in the league?

JH: Andrew 'Sally' McDermott.

DR: If you were invisible what's the first place you would sneak into?

JH: Into a ladies change room at a beauty pageant.

DR: Who or what inspires you?

JH: My dad. He is always on my back hassling, and gets me going.

DR: Complete this sentence "Love is..."

JH: ...nearly everything.

DR: Which 'high roller' teammate is a regular enthusiast on the 'black-jack'?

JH: Lou Acevski likes to gamble.

DR: Are you the first or

last to leave the change rooms after a game?

JH: Nearly last. If we win, I like to think about the result. If we lose, I'm a sour puss.

DR: What animal (or thing) best describes your personality?

JH: A cat... when I'm angry I just walk off.

DR: Do you have any hidden talents (that you can share with us)?

JH: I can do good taxi-driver impersonations.

DR: Do you have any bad habits?

JH: Biting my finger nails.

DR: Describe your idea of a romantic night out?

JH: A nice dinner at a restaurant, going to the theatre, ice-cream and walk

along the beach, and then I'll drop her off at home.

DR: What is the biggest misconception about sportsmen?

JH: We're not approachable.

DR: What is the first thing you do when you arrive home?

JH: Switch on the playstation.

DR: Does John follow any pre-match rituals?

JH: A have a one and a half hour nap or I'm grouchy, and then lunch at Michael Cartwright's house (his wife Gracie cooks a mean pasta).

DR: Do you have a favorite meal?

JH: Gracie's cooking.

DR: How would you spend your last \$50?

JH: Going to watch a Soccer game between... Newcastle United vs Blackburn Rovers.



Simon Bell: Hutchinson reckons he could do with a new wardrobe.



John Hutchinson (right) with a Spirit teammate.



Col Curran: Member of '74 World Cup team.

Letters to the Editor

Is Ian Knop anti-Victoria?

Dear Sir,
I was disgusted recently to hear Soccer Australia boss, Ian Knop say that Melbourne Knights or South Melbourne will have to go. There were four NSL teams from Victoria, but they (Soccer Australia) destroyed two of them, now they want to destroy yet another club.

No wonder Mr Knop wants a team out, so his beloved Canberra Cosmos can come back into the league. Hmm, Mr Knop you are running a big

organisation here, not a family business. There are about seven NSL teams from Sydney. Why don't Soccer Australia just make the NSL an all-Sydney affair. Kick the Brisbanes out the Perths out and just let Sydney teams be in there. It's not fair really. All us Victorian Soccer fans should stand up and tell Mr Knop where to go. If the Knights and Hellas go, it will screw Victorian Soccer up badly. It's bad as it is now and if another club here gets the



Ian Knop

chop they'll be making it worse.

If they kick out any of these two clubs, I guarantee there will be riots in Victoria. Let's

stand up, all Victorian Soccer fans.

Burim Sulemani,
Dandenong, VIC.

Oz Soccer Salvation lies in East Asia

Dear Sir,
In my last letter I mentioned that the best way for Australia to qualify for the finals is to dismantle Oceania and incorporate it into an East-Asian Pacific Confederation.

I agree with Johnny Warren and Nick Tana that qualifying through an Asian group is the best way for Australia in the long term. Unlike Mexico, which has a strong Soccer culture, a direct route for Australia through Oceania is only good for the short term, so Soccer Australia can pay it's debt's.

Even though Asia is the weakest Confederation after Oceania, it deserves to be split into two for many good reasons.

It is by far the largest Confederation in population and area (with Australia), with about 60% of the world's population (over 31/2 billion people). A split down the middle along racial and religious lines would give you two distinct and different Confederations of roughly equal size in member countries (about 20

each) and population (1.7 or 1.8 billion each).

That would still make both larger in population than any of the others. Another reason it needs to be split into two is because it spans eight time zones which is not particularly good for live TV ratings if an Arab country from the west is playing Oriental country from the East. The dividing line between the two of course would be China and India with the Asian Central Republic's and Bangladesh with the West with China and Burma to the East.

That to me is better than this silly little Confederation of around 30 million who don't have a Soccer culture at all. The best way to help all Oceania nations, not just Australia, is for the tiny Pacific countries to have their own two qualifying groups first, with either both winners (say Fiji and Vanuatu) or the ultimate winner, joining Australia and New Zealand into two or three East-Asian Groups of six or seven countries (depending how many participate) to qualify in a Round Robin of home and away matches to qualify for the three or four spots available in the East Asia Pacific area. West Asia would still have two spots.

Before people and critics say its a crazy idea because of player availability, that should be only a minor problem. As long as we get five or six solid high pressure meaningful games at home (one in every capital city) who cares who plays for Australia?

If the overseas players won't come, the locals can do the job against the weaker countries both here and abroad. Only against the strongest country in the group would you need your superstars.

If the gamble doesn't play off and we fail to qualify if won't matter so much, as long as we have those five or six top notch games at home with Soccer Australia making a profit for a change. The public will still come out and support a second string Aussie side if it's almost as good as the top one, plus can get the job done.

I have been saying the past 10 to 15 years that our future lies with East Asia in Football teams, but our illustrious liberal party leader led by John Howard his mate, Minister for (immigration) Phillip Ruddock have pushed us further and further away.

Dominic Scullino,
Nerang, Qld.

Still on '74 Aussie World Cup Squad

Dear Sir,

In replay to Barry Basmegg (ACT) in ABSW of 18.12.2001 there might have been nine Aussie-born players registered with Soccer Australia but the teams taken to the field, in the 1974 World Cup were:

14-6-1974 (lost 0-2 East Germany)

Reilly, Utjesenovic, Scafer, Wilson, Curran, Richards, Mackay, Rooney, Warren, Alston, Buljevic, only two Aussie-born players which are under lined.

18-6-1974 (lost 0-3 West Germany)

Reilly, Utjesenovic, Scafer, Wilson, Curran, Richards, Rooney, Mackay, Campbell, (Abonyi (sub), Alston, Buljevic, (Ollerton (sub).

2206-1974 (drew 0-0 with Chile)

Reilly, Utjesenovic, Scafer, Wilson, Curran, (Williams (sub), Richards, Rooney, Mackay, Abonyi, Alston, (Ollerton (sub), Buljevic.

So, as you can see and I wrote only two or three Aussie-born players made it into the team. Also, you missed out on your list the player who I believe took over as captain Peter Wilson. Another over seas-born player you never named, Peter Ollerton who comes from Lancashire. Granted some of them learned how to play here

when they were young, but they were still from overseas. I also agree with Burim Sulemani from Dandenong, Vic (ABSW 11.12.01) what he said about Emerton.

I think he is a bit-overrated. If he and Viduka were English they would not get to be on

the bench for the England team and Harry is not in the same class as Michael Owen.

Sorry to say it but Soccer in this country has a long way to go before they can match it with the big boys.

D. Gardner,
Hampton Park, VIC.



Les Scheinflug: End of the road?

Scheinflug, Labbozzetta, Yesterday Men

Dear Sir,

Les Scheinflug's coaching career appears to be coming to an end. His many friends in Soccer circles are attempting to lionise him as some sort of Oz Soccer demi-god.

Is this the real story? As player (and I saw him play) you would be hard pressed to find anyone game enough to criticise him because he was truly a fine player.

However as a coach the story is somewhat different. Disregard the biased views of his mates and talk to some credible neutral observers and you get a much more sober view of his performance. I am not saying he was a bad coach but one thing is not in dispute and that is he was a much better player than coach.

On another matter it seems that the Labbozzetta loyalists are desperately trying to have him reinstated as supreme of Soccer NSW.

Someone much more suitable (if he is interested) would be the retiring C.E.O. of Sims Metals Mr John Crabb. Unlike 99% of corporate types involved in soccer who are 100% Soccer illiterate, John Crabb

has impeccable Soccer credentials.

A few years ago he tried to get involved with Oz Soccer but was rebuffed by the David Hill clique. Perhaps the stakeholders of Soccer NSW should sound him out. For many the idea that a major Soccer

body should be controlled by somebody who is competent well connected and with real Soccer background and a genuine passion is a frightening thought.

It would be a nice chance if it came to pass here hoping.

R. Melor,
Bondi, NSW.



Tony Labozetta

You got it wrong John

Dear Sir,

Seldom have I read such an unbelievable piece as the article in "The Good Oil" in your December 31 issue.

John Economos apparently finds it scandalous that a newspaper should report the fact that an investigation is underway into allegations that a former Soccer Australia official used that organisation's money to treat overseas officials to a visit to a massage parlour.

Economos writes that the article was "malicious" and that the information was leaked by "a germ" and so on,

adding with a veiled threat to the whistle-blower.

I have no doubt that the vast majority of soccer fans object strongly to Soccer Australia's money being used in this way.

If soccer is to be cleaned up in this country we need more whistle-blowers and more investigative journalism of this sort.

It is exactly the sort of story that your newspaper should be investigating — instead of mounting defences

for the indefensible.
Mal Adroit,
Darling Park, NSW.

OFF THE CROSSBAR



By Allan Crisp

ANY IMPORT IN A STORM

When New Zealand international Jeff Campbell flew out of Adelaide last week to rejoin the Football Kingz, he became the 12th overseas import in the past three seasons to desert Adelaide City Force.

Campbell, 22, is the third overseas recruit to flee the Force this season, joining former Polish international Grzegorz Lewandowski and Yugoslav defender Petar Cestic, who also skipped back to their native lands.

When they made their exits, none of the trio deserved a ticker tape parade to recognise long service with Lewandowski chalking up nine games and Cestic five matches, while Campbell saw only 22 minutes of NSL action for City against Olympic Sharks.

Force coach Zoran Matic was unimpressed by Campbell when he starred for the Kingz against Adelaide City at Hindmarsh Stadium last season and the young Kiwi was duly snapped up on a two-year contract.

City supporters did not have the chance to assess Campbell because he arrived in Adelaide carrying a groin-related injury.

"I told him if I knew he was injured I wouldn't have signed him," Matic told "Advertiser" soccer writer Meno Toutsidis.

As a founding member of the NSL, Adelaide City has been a leader in spicing its squad with the long-term additions of overseas professional players.

City set the bench-mark by signing former Glasgow Celtic and Scottish international Dixie Deans, who set the local heather alight by topping the inaugural Philips League scoring list with 16 crowd

pleasing goals.

Former Red Star champion Milan Ivanovic maintained the lofty import standard by carving a brilliant second career with Adelaide City that culminated in an amazingly successful run as an Australian international defender.

More recently, Italian striker Claudio Pelosi thrilled the Force faithful while chalking up 48 NSL appearances.

Pelosi lacked the international credentials of Deans and Ivanovic, but atoned by producing gutsy, never say die efforts which invariably won or saved games.

But, the quality of these imported perfectionists had a down side with the demanding fans unprepared to accept second best.

Imports had to be important big name players and the paying punters refused to accept fly-by night, average performers, who take up space that could be better filled by the young talent within the club structure.

There were several undistinguished names among the 22 imports, which kept the Force exit gate swinging over the past two seasons.

There also were players on that list, like South Korean defender Dong-Ki-Kim, who played 53 matches, Scottish international Derek Ferguson (2-games) as well as, Cestic and Lewandowski, who could have enhanced Adelaide's play-off chances in any season.

Costly lessons are being learned by Aussie clubs as "visiting" journeymen come and go at the slightest whim.

As in any contract deal, blame can be apportioned to both the player and the club if either party fails to meet their obligations.

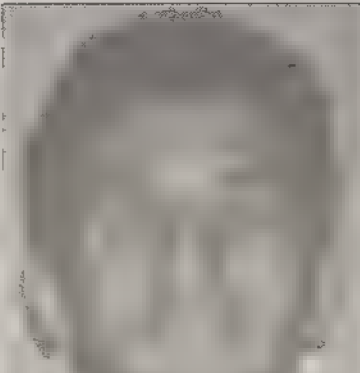
In the case of Adelaide City Force, not all of the 22 players departed amid acrimonious circumstances.

In the main, that is because the club has been steadfast in its view that there is no value in keeping a player, who is unsettled, discontented, or wants to leave to accept a more lucrative offer.

CITY'S X-MEN COULD BE A FORCE

Adelaide City Force is doubtless accounting the cost of losing the previously mentioned imported players.

But, imports are not the only ones to leave South Australia's sole NSL club in recent seasons.



Milan Ivanovic: Ex-Adelaide City import, who successfully went on to star for Australia

In fact, a star-studded squad capable of winning a championship could be formed from the men who have previously worn the black and white vertical striped shirts of Adelaide City.

How about this for a likely lot of experienced campaigners? Starting with Soccerroo goalkeeper, Jason Petkovic (Perth Glory), who could be backed by fellow gloved crusaders, Les Pogliacomi (Parramatta Power) and Vilson Knezevic (Sydney United).

Alex Tobin (Parramatta Power) could be in the heart of a defence that could include Angelo Costanzo (Marconi), Michael Cartwright (Northern Spirit) and Scott Thomas (Northern Spirit).

Versatile, Travis Dodd (Newcastle United) could occupy a flank role or play in the midfield.

Ivan Zelic (Sydney United) and Dino Mennillo (Wollongong Wolves) also have the versatility to play in defence or in the midfield.

Craig Foster (Northern Spirit), Brad Hassell (Perth Glory) and David Clarkson (South Melbourne) are class midfielders, while up front the goals should flow with Damian Mori (Perth Glory) and Kris Trajanovski (Brisbane Strikers) reunited.

Of course, this pipe-dream dream

squad can't happen. Time moves on and so do players!

EARLY EXIT FOR BRAIN

Youth Soccerroo and Joey squad member Louis Brain, who was negotiating a loan release from Adelaide City, has played his last game for that club.

Brain ended his stay with City after a heated exchange with coach, Zoran Matic at a New Year's Eve training session at Ram Park.

Matic sought an explanation from Brain over alleged comments made during an interview on radio 5RPH on its Sunday program.

"Zoran wanted me to apologise and I didn't believe I said anything that I needed to apologise for," Brain said.

"It's unfortunate it should end this way but I have no ill feeling about the club. Adelaide City gave me my start in the NSL and there's certainly no bitterness on my part."

STRATEGIC PLAN

A South Australian Soccer Federation seminar held last November uncovered many interesting features designed to improve the status of soccer football.

The key features of the SASF Strategic Plan encompassed 1. Sustainable Futures. 2. Administrative Processes. 3. Participation. 4. Stateholders Co-operation. 5. Infrastructure and Coaching.

1. Sustainable Futures: Three-year "Clubs Strengthening Project" - Active Australia Program - Fund a pilot project to provide administrative, financial, and marketing consultant advice to clubs, on an "as needs" basis.

2. Administrative Processes: Supporting competitions, Club based third division. Partnership with Amateurs, Support national second division.

3. Marketing Plan: Increase direct cash benefits to clubs from SASF level, marketing, sponsorship. Club Strengthening Project: Local identification through media, schools, business, local council - to improve attendances and local sponsorship. Develop and implement strategies to rekindle interest of "lost" fans: Identify web marketing strategies and opportunities to assess feasibility of a "Soccer Card" or a "Soccer Magazine". Conduct market research on public opinion: Participation: Improve retention rates of teenagers playing the game.

4. Stakeholders Co-operation: Stakeholders project to improve co-ordination and co-operation. Game marketing plan; Quarterly reports; Country support.

5. Infrastructure and Coaching: Improve and expand coaching. Increase referee numbers.

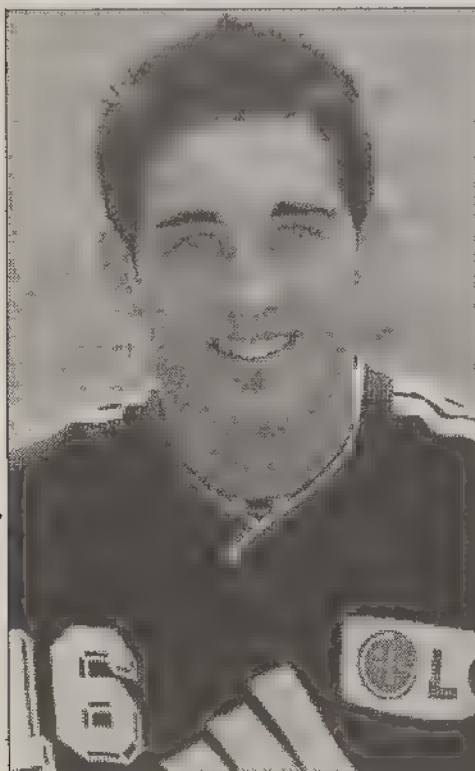
Key features of the seminar summarised by Playford Patriots' media manager Ian Luker.



Dino Mennillo: Ex-Adelaide star now spearheading Wollongong Wolves' revival.

ABSW's SA correspondent, Allan Crisp and former Australian international and Adelaide City coach John Perin, can be heard on the 5RPH (1197AM). Marshall Thompson - Homes Pacific Real Estate Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7am-9am.

Perin and Crisp are joined by SA and Blue Eagles striker Michael Brooks each Sunday for the 5RPH SOS (Soccer on Sunday) program from 8.30am-9.30am when the latest local, overseas and interstate scores are aired along with the latest news, views and interviews.



Carl Valeri: One of the few players still at AIS.

Players' exodus cripple AIS

By Graham Cooke

The Australian Institute of Sport is currently going through a process which club coaches see only in their worst nightmares - an almost complete change of players in mid-season.

Only Anthony Danze, Jonty Richter and Carl Valeri remain from the squad that performed for the AIS in the National Youth League up to Christmas, although two Canberra-based players, Ian Waldon and Matt Anstey, not on full-scholarship but who train and play with the institute, are also staying on.

The rest have been scattered, most now attached to the squads of NSL clubs, a couple of the best already holding down first-team places.

Institute assistant coach Ray Junna said this latest crop of graduates have mostly just turned 18 and will form the backbone of the Young Soccerroos team for next year's World Youth Cup "assuming Soccer Australia's finances allows us

to enter".

The players replacing them will be two years younger, some younger still if National Youth Coach Ange Postecoglou recommends any outstanding candidates from the under-15 Pacific Cup, taking place in Sydney this month.

"Ange's idea is that two or three under-15 players come into the institute where they get the benefit of full-time training and then become the core of the Joeys team in the next under-17 championships. We've done it before and it has worked quite well."

While AIS training began this week, there are still six squad places to be filled. All scholarship holders are expected to be in place in time for the beginning of the school year, although not necessarily before the resumption of the NYL season on January 19.

Junna said molding a fresh team in mid-season was always difficult, and had not been helped by the fact the old squad had finished with three consecutive losses. "That was especially disap-

pointing because we had been unbeaten up until then," he said. "I think people started to look forward to Christmas and joining NSL clubs, and took their minds off the job."

"But there were other factors, because from early on we were losing players who were being pulled out of the institute early by their clubs."

"In one game against Sydney United when we also had a couple of injuries and suspensions, I had to play to make up the numbers. You learn to live with it."

An overseas tour was being planned for this year, probably in July. The destination, either South America or Europe, had not been decided.

The new scholarship holders selected so far are: Adam Federici (NSW Institute of Sport), Ben Hughes (Newcastle United), Chris Tadrossi (NSW Institute of Sport), Jobe Wheelhouse (Newcastle United), Liam Lilly (Western Australia), Adam Casey (ACT), Billy Celevski (Melbourne Knights), Vince Lia (South Melbourne), Eli Gilfedder (NSW).

Goran, Suker may follow Cantona to Knights



By Bert van Bedaf

The Melbourne Knights are rapidly becoming the entertainment club of soccer in Melbourne after signing French legend Eric Cantona for at least one NSL match next month.

The ex-Manchester United captain is set to don the Knights red shirt for a guest appearance against South Melbourne at Colonial stadium on February 8. He might stay on for a second game, possibly against Marconi in Sydney or against Perth in Tasmania.

Lifting the crowd-pulling bar won't stop with Cantona. Ovcacic also hopes to sign Croatian tennis star and Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic and Croatian world cup player Davor Suker for guest appearances. In fact, there's a long list of names, including German marksman Jurgen Klinsman and Italian striker Toto Schillaci.

Previously, English legend Peter Beardsley trotted out for a couple of games with the Knights and it's more than likely others are to follow as the Knights endeavour to push the ratings value of club and game in Melbourne.

The new frontier for the Knights is entertainment and value added services, according to its director Alen Rados. A senior executive with News Corporation in Melbourne, Rados is the driving force behind changing the Croatian-backed club into an entertainment enterprise where soccer is part of a total package.

He described the club's recent failed attempt to stage home matches on Saturday nights at Knights stadium as a "half-baked experiment". The Knights reverted to Sundays to stop the slide when home attendances shrunk alarmingly to around 3,000.

"We didn't do enough to promote it (Saturday nights) and we didn't give it enough time. But then again we don't do enough to promote anything," Rados said in an undisguised criticism of the club's administration.

He is a trenchant critic of Knights Stadium and wants Colonial Stadium as the club's Melbourne base. The Knights are currently debating whether to sell their Sunshine ground to a housing developer and move to Colonial.

"We are in the NSL. This is a national code and we're playing in Victorian Premier League conditions. Nothing is working for us here (Knights Stadium). Colonial fits the bill and now that Channel Seven has control (Seven recently took a majority stake in the

ownership of the stadium), the economics are working in our favour," Rados said.

"We have to pitch ourselves at Colonial on a Friday night. That's what we're looking at. We want to make Colonial Stadium our home ground and that's a big ask. How do we fill the ground? And how do we pay for it? We are doing our sums," he said.

The Knights are also in the process of establishing a second home in Tasmania in a bid to create a wider supporter group. The Cantona invitation may well become the icing on the Tassie cake, if the enigmatic Frenchman, voted the most popular Manchester United footballer ever by the club's fans, can cope with a two-week holiday in Queensland between engagements.

The Knights round 20 match against Perth Glory will be staged in Launceston on Saturday, February 23.

The Cantona deal was managed by another astute Knights director John Ovcacic, who also attracted Beardsley to the club two seasons ago.

Signing drawcards has become a Knights speciality. Home town rival South Melbourne does not indulge in it.

The key to the Knights survival not only as a soccer force but also as a business entity, Rados believes, is the re-branding of the club, including adopting a new name and a new strip in addition to settling into a new venue. It will definitely mean a new image not 'away

from' but clearly beyond its traditional support in the Croatian community.

"We need to re-invent the club and broaden our supporter base. The product (soccer) is all right, but we need to beef it up. Any club that doesn't do that should not be in the national league," Rados said.

Rados believes that on-field performance is important, but "as a business, a club needs to hedge itself when it doesn't win a championship".

That is where marketing, merchandising and member services, such as a loyalty or reward card and product discounts, come into it, as well as signing the odd, faded, legendary, international star for publicity and entertainment value.

"Soccer is big business and we need to change the way we do business. Soccer is bigger business than is being



Davor Suker: Pencilled-down for guest appearances at Melbourne Knights.

realised (in Australia) and we need to be innovative or clubs like South Melbourne or the Knights will drop by the wayside just like other clubs (such as Collingwood Warriors, Carlton Blues and Eastern Pride) that have fallen over," Rados said.

There are 50,000 people (in Victoria), who play soccer at club level, why aren't they coming to the games. There is something fundamentally wrong and clubs need wholesale reform for the better," Rados said.

Kewell's injury worries Leeds

Leeds coach, David O'Leary admitted over the weekend that the club's medical staff

are at a loss over the back problem that is putting Harry Kewell's season on hold.



Harry Kewell

Kewell has not played for the Premiership leaders since picking up the injury in a 2-2 draw against Leicester City at Elland Road in December.

Intensive treatment has failed to cure the problem and Leeds have been unable to pinpoint exactly what is wrong with the Australian international winger.

Kewell has been ordered to rest but O'Leary admitted that he has no idea when the 23-year-old will be fit to return. He said: "Harry had a scan a few weeks ago when he did it and that showed there's nothing wrong."

"But backs take time. He's just got to rest it up and we can't imagine how long he'll be out for."

Kewell has been in top form recently after a sluggish start to the season which was compounded by a round-the-world trip to represent Australia in a two-legged World Cup play-off against Uruguay.

His absence is a major concern to Leeds as they look to consolidate their place at the top of the English premiership table.

Canberra University quits ACT League

By Graham Cooke

The University of Canberra have confirmed their resignation from the ACT Premiership, plunging the territory's main competition into uncertainty in the run-up to the 2002 season.

Senior League chairman Walter Valeri said an initial application for Premiership membership by State League club Queanbeyan City had been withdrawn "So we will go ahead with eight teams," he said last week.

That means a decision must be taken on whether to go to three rounds. "It's a problem in itself because three rounds results in a 21 match competition, which is more than we would have over two rounds with our ideal number of 10 teams," he said.

On the other hand there was widespread dissatisfaction in the late 1980s when the then eight team premiership was played over two rounds and 14 games. "I can understand that," Valeri



Tony Brennan: Canberra Uni Coach.

said. "A club makes a bad start and the next season is over after five games."

It will be up to the clubs to decide. The senior league management committee can make recommendations, but at the end of the day it is the clubs

who must live with 14 games or pay the extra in ground hire and referees' fees for three rounds.

"Obviously a shorter competition would suit Belconnen, who play in both the Premiership and the NSW Premier League during the summer, but we can never lose sight of the fact the league is run for the interests of all clubs, not one."

Despite the controversy that has surrounded the decision to make the under-19 division non-compulsory for Premiership clubs, all eight have nominated.

It means there is no change from last season - an under-19 division, under-23 with four over-age players and open first grade," he said.

"It will be even the established clubs would not abandon their youth policies. The rule was changed more to attract new clubs into the competition as it meant they did not immediately have to field three teams."

"In that respect it has failed - at least for this season."

French fracas over Chipperfield

Giant French club sides are locked in a frenzied battle for the services of former Wollongong Wolves striker, Scott Chipperfield in an attempt to lure him away from Swiss club Basle.

The clubs are Champions League campaigners Nantes, Troyes and Lorient.

"Basle say they want me to stay until the end of the season but I want to go to France.

Basle insists the Socceroos striker should honour his four-year contract, forcing Nantes to table a mouthwatering \$3.5 million bid for Chipperfield.

Basle, which signed Chipperfield for a meagre \$100,000 at the beginning of the season, are keen to hang onto him and demonstrated their resolve by offering him an improved contract worth up to \$50,000 a month after winning bonuses.

"Lorient put in an offer that was rejected by Basle but now Lorient's coach has gone to Nantes," Chipperfield revealed last week while holidaying in

the country, on break from the Swiss season.

"If nothing happens between now and when I go back to Switzerland next (this) week then I will talk to the club when I get

back and hopefully make the move.

"I have been in Europe now for six months and I know what being full-time is all about

"I know I can play well in

France but it depends on Basle.

They have the final say," concluded Chipperfield, who has won the NSL best-player award for the past two seasons.

SEVEN KEEPS SOCCER SLOT

In a show of its commitment to the local game, the Seven Network last week announced it will continue to televise the "Australian Soccer" show, despite the network's extensive coverage of the Australian Open tennis.

Over the next three weeks therefore, "Australian Soccer" will be screened at 10.00am (AEST), an hour ahead of its normal time slot.

"There were some concerns by soccer fans that the show might not even make it to air because of the Australian

Open," said General Manager of the National Soccer League, Stefan Kamasz.

"However the Seven Network has clearly demonstrated its support for soccer by ensuring that "Australian Soccer" continues to be screened during this period of tennis coverage.



"The program has been rating well, and continues to generally dominate its time-slot on Sunday mornings, while the Friday night

NSL replays are also drawing large numbers of viewers," Kamasz said.



Scott Chipperfield: All the centre of a three-way battle for his services by French club sides.

MENDEZ DEBUTS FOR BRAVEHEARTS

Gabriel Mendez last week agreed to terms and completed his transfer from Northern Spirit to Sydney United.

Mendez along with new acquisition Sebastian Sinozic made their debuts for Sydney United against Adelaide Force on Sunday.

The 28 year-old Mendez is looking for a fresh start after a disappointing time at North Sydney Oval. A few seasons back, he was at his brilliant best in a Sydney Olympic team that never lived up to its potential. Mendez is hoping to recapture that form in the colours of Sydney United and has not given up hope of one last shot at an overseas contract.

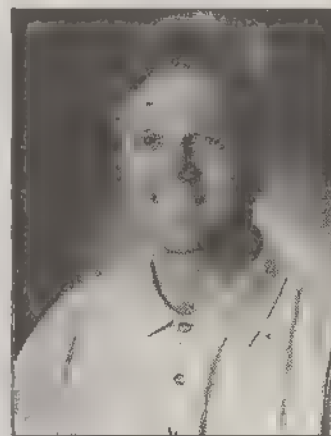


United coach, Branko Culina was delighted with his latest signing, especially one that delivered frequently while he was in charge of Olympic. "A good player doesn't become a bad player overnight and I believe Mendez could be a potential match winner for us and I am pleased that he has joined the Club", stated Culina.

Also joining was 23 year-old defender

Sebastian Sinozic from Branko Culina's former Olympic Sharks. The solid young defender has been signed to bolster the defence that has been hit by injuries in

the past few weeks. Another player expect-



Branko Culina: Bravehearts' coach.

ed to make his debut is 18 year-old striker Christian Cevenini who has been playing some great football in United's youth team.

Coach Branko Culina made a number of changes to the team that lost to Newcastle and is hoping the injection of some fresh faces will inspire the team to recapture the form that produced victories over the Melbourne Knights and Northern Spirit.



Gabriel Mendez: Made his debut for Sydney United last Sunday, since his midseason transfer from Northern Spirit.

National Youth League

SOUTHERN DIVISION

RESULTS RD 11

Green Gully (Matthew Scerri)	1 Melbourne Knights Aca 2 (Masumi Nishida, Dario Matkovic)
South Melbourne Eagles (Steve Esposito 4, own goal)	5 Bulleen Zebras 0
South Melbourne Inst. (Dimitri Tsiras 2)	2 Melbourne Knights Youth 1 (Tony Saric)
Albury Wodonga (Daniel Ross 7, Chris Mitchell, Mario Antonello)	5 Preston Lions 3 (Robert Dolevski 2, Ali Uguz, Mario Antonello)

NORTHERN DIVISION LEAGUE LADDER ROUND 13

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melbourne	10	8	2	0	45	10	26
South Melb. Eagles Ac	10	6	1	3	22	13	19
Melbourne Knights	10	5	3	2	23	11	18
Melb. Knights Acad.	11	5	2	4	23	16	17
Bulleen Zebras	10	5	1	4	22	27	16
Albury Wodonga	10	3	1	6	19	24	10
Green Gully Caval.	10	2	2	6	7	20	8
Preston Lions	11	0	2	9	12	52	2

Round 12 Fixtures

- Melbourne Knights Academy v Albury Wodonga
(Knights Stadium, 7.30 pm)
- South Melbourne Eagles v Preston Lions
(Bob Jane Stadium, 5. pm)
- Melbourne Knights Youth v Bulleen Zebras,
(Knights Stadium, 5 pm)
- Green Gully v South Melbourne Institute
(Green Gully Reserve, 5 pm)

By Roy Hay

Bob Jane Stadium 2 Melb. Knights Youth 1

A last minute goal, shrouded in controversy, gave the South Melbourne Institute a two-one win over Melbourne Knights at Bob Jane Stadium. Dimitri Tsiras put the Blues ahead in 19 minutes, a lead which they held until the interval.

Tony Saric scored for the Knights about fifteen minutes into the second half, but was then sent off for his second bookable offence. When Zoltan Zold got a straight red card with twenty five minutes left, the Knights were down to nine men, but battled on gamely until the very last minute when South got its winner. Tsiras popped up to force the ball towards goal and the Assistant Referee adjudged that it had just crossed the line. Apart from Tsiras the Blues best was Vince Laa, in his last game before joining the Australian Institute of Sport.

Albury Wodonga 5 Preston Lions 3

Eight goals in blistering heat and a home win by 5-3 kept the fans entertained at Myrtleford as Albury Wodonga Warriors took on the Preston Lions. Daniel Ross was the local hero with a hat-trick in 14, 20 and 71 minutes. Chris Mitchell scored for the Warriors just before the interval to set up a three-nil break.

Robert Dolevski converted a penalty for the Lions in 57, but Mitchell's third goal and one by Mario Antonello took the Warriors to 5-1 and it seemed all over. But as they have often done this season, the young Lions came back with another Dolevski penalty and a strike by Ali Uguz. John Barnes and Jason Whetton had excellent games for the Warriors, as did Ross, but it was a good all round effort by the lads from the border.

South Melbourne Eagles 5 Bulleen Zebras 0

Bulleen Zebras held South Melbourne Eagles to a single goal for about seventy minutes of their match at Bob Jane Stadium, but then the Eagles powered away to a 5-0 victory. Skipper Steve Esposito was the destroyer in chief, having a hand in all five goals.

One was credited as an own goal, while he could put his hand up for the others. Fanol Isai admitted that the Eagles were by far the better team on the day.

Green Gully 1 Melb. Knights Aca. 2

Melbourne Knights Academy scraped home by 2-1 against Green Gully at Green Gully Reserve on Sunday. Masumi Nishida and

Dario Matkovic scored the goals for the Academy and Matthew Scerri was on target for Green Gully

NORTHERN DIVISION

RESULTS RD 13

NSWIS	0 Newcastle United Youth	4
Wollongong Wolves Youth	2 Northern Spirit Youth	2
NSWIS	1 QAS	1
ACTAS	1 Olympic Sharks Youth	5
Marconi Stallions Youth	5 Sydney United Colts	1
Marconi Stallions Colts	0 Parramatta Power Youth	6
Brisbane Toro	2 Newcastle United Youth	3
QAS	2 NSWIS	1

LEAGUE LADDER RD 13

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Parramatta Power Youth	13	10	0	3	48	13	30
Newcastle United Youth	14	10	0	4	28	18	30
Sydney United Youth	13	9	1	3	30	10	28
Wollongong Wolves Youth	13	9	1	3	36	19	28
AIS	12	9	0	3	32	15	27
Marconi Stallions Youth	13	8	1	4	24	12	25
QAS	14	7	3	4	27	20	24
ACTAS	12	7	0	5	26	28	21
Olympic Sharks Youth	14	4	4	6	23	21	16
Northern Spirit Youth	13	4	3	6	26	29	15
NSWIS	16	3	2	11	16	43	11
Brisbane Toro	13	2	0	11	16	43	6
Sydney United Colts	13	1	2	10	9	43	5
Marconi Stallions Colts	13	1	1	11	9	36	4

ROUND 14 FIXTURES

- ACTAS Vs QAS 5.00pm AIS Soccer Field
- NSWIS Vs Sydney United Colts Valentine Sports Park
- Northern Spirit Youth Vs Parramatta Power Youth Christie Park
- Marconi Stallions Youth Vs Wollongong Wolves Youth Marconi Stadium
- Marconi Stallions Colts Vs Newcastle Utd Youth Marconi Stadium
- Sydney United Youth Vs Olympic Sharks Youth
- Sydney United Sports Centre

SOCCER WOMAN BY JANENE MAR

MATILDAS, KOREANS RE-ENACT '96 SHOWDOWN

The Matildas and South Korea, soon to clash in the upcoming 4th Australia Cup, have experienced vastly different paths since their last meeting during the M-Wey Tri-Series in Auckland, in March 1996.

Then under National Coach Tom Sermanni, it was Australia's first tournament since the 1995 FIFA Women's World Cup and US Women's Cup held soon after. The Matildas, football minnows thrown in the 'Group of Death' against USA, China and Denmark, had performed bravely at their first World Cup, although finishing in twelfth position.

The Matildas won this tournament, but more importantly showed encouraging signs for the future. Later we went on to qualify for our second World Cup and experienced their first Olympic Games as 2000 hosts..

The Tri-Series marked the beginning of a rebuilding period working towards the longer term goal of the 1999 World Cup.

Nine of the twenty World Cup Team members made the trip across the Tasman to take on rivals New Zealand and the unknown South Korea - Tracey Wheeler, Cheryl Salisbury, Sarah Cooper, Sunni Hughes, Lisa Casagrande, Sonia Gegenhuber, Sacha Wainwright, Louise McMurtre, and Lizzy Claydon. Four celebrated their debut Matildas selection - Joanne Peters, Amy Wilson, Kristyn Swaffer, and Tammie Thornton, whilst Katrina Boyd

made her full debut after having only played against a club team five years previous. Sharon Black made her comeback after making her first appearance in 1991, and youngster Dianne Alagich played her second tournament.

Five of that 1996 team are part

of new boss Adrian Santrac's lineup for this Australia Cup - Salisbury, Casagrande, Wainwright, Peters, and Black.

Let's recap on those first two matches against the South Koreans almost six years ago -

Aussies do it tough over Korea

(25 March, 1996)
Australia 1
(Lisa Casagrande 67)
SOUTH KOREA 0

Australia found the going tough against a defensive Korea in the second match of the M-Wey Tri-Series in Auckland, narrowly winning 1-0.

On the second day, a row for the Australians, the match was soured by a serious injury, this time young defender Dianne Alagich collapsed to the ground in the 11th minute after first injuring her knee with a sudden turn five minutes earlier.

After twenty minutes, Australia started to dominate possession and managed to create some opportunities through the good work of Hughes, Joanne Peters, Sarah Cooper, and Lizzy Claydon. Australia's best chance came just before the break, Hughes' strike from 22 metres thumping against the underside of

the crossbar and rebounding onto the goalkeeper's back and was then deflected rather than in.

In the 67th minute the deadlock was finally broken when young striker Lisa Casagrande hit a low drive which completely deceived the diving keeper, the ball bounding over her outstretched body into the net. Korea finished strongly as they finally pushed players forward, creating several good chances, but the Aussie defence held out to end with the single goal victory.

The win gave Australia a clear lead at the top of the table halfway through the two round series, and with a welcome three day rest before again taking on Korea.

Korean Coach Lee E Wook felt happy to be playing such quality opposition "Australia has a long history in the game, we are just beginning. We are happy to learn lots of skills from the Australians who in my opinion is an excellent team."

UPSET LOSS TO KOREA

(29 March, 1996)
South Korea 2
(Cha Sung Mi 10, Choi Yun Hee 56)
Australia 1
(Katrina Boyd 4)

Clear favourites Australia suffered their first loss of the M-Wey Tri-Series in Auckland, going down 2-1 to a determined Korea after an ordinary performance.

Australia took the field with quite a different lineup due to a number of injury problems, but change of personnel was not the problem.

But the honeymoon was soon over when Korea started to stamp their authority on the game, their reward in the form of an equaliser in the 10th minute. The Australian defence failed to clear a high freekick into the box, leaving midfielder Cha Sung Mi with a clear header which went in at the near post, the first goal conceded by Australia for the tournament.

Korea continued to pressure Australia who fell into the trap of rushing play, hitting stray passes and generally looking disjointed with mistakes becoming far too frequent. Australia came back stronger for the opening period after half-time, looking more positive and creative with the ball, and unlucky not to score from close range after seven minutes. But the Koreans then caught the Australians asleep in the 56th minute with a breakaway move which saw striker Choi Yun Hee unchallenged to drive from 18 metres on the left to take the lead 2-1, much to the underdogs' delight.

Korea's Young Guns

South Korea's 18-member team was named last Wednesday, shortly after the Korean Football Association formally reappointed Head Coach An Jong Gwan following his good performances in the Toto Cup, the Universiade, and the recent Asian Championship.

Fifteen of the touring side were part of the successful team in Taiwan which narrowly lost its Asian Championship semifinal to Japan, and are joined by three youngsters. The large majority of the team are aged in their early to mid twenties. Five played against Australia in the 1996 Tri-Series in Auckland.

SOUTH KOREA TEAM

JUNG Hee Jung, JIN Suk Hee, YOO Young S, capt, LEE J Eun, CHA Sung Mi, HWANG In Sun, PARK Yoon Jung, CHAE Song I, KANG San Mi, KIM Yoon M, LEE Kye Lim, KOAK M Hee, LEE Myung Hwa, KIM M Jung, PARK Kyung Suk, PARK Hae Jung, JUNG Jung Suk, PARK Mi Kyung.

THE MATILDAS

Clare NICHOLS, Rhian DAVIES, Sacha WAINWRIGHT, Tracey BARTITT, Cheryl SALISBURY, Aneissa IANN, Sharon BLACK, Alison FORMAN, capt, April MANN, Joanne PETERS, Lisa CASAGRANDE, Kate McSHEA, Zoe NOLAN, Gill THOMSON, Tarry ROCKALL, Heather GARRICK, Kelly COLEBIOWSKI, Cassandra KELL.

4TH AUSTRALIA CUP SCHEDULE

Fri 11 January 2002
Fisher Park, Cootamundra
6.30pm*



Sharon Black

Young Matildas v Canberra
Expense
*NB: Change of kickoff time.

Sun 13 January 2002

Riverside Oval, Wagga, Wagga
3.30pm
Young Matildas v NSW Select
6.00pm

THE MATILDAS v SOUTH KOREA

Wed 16 January 2002

Lavington Sports Club Oval,
Albury 4.30pm
Young Matildas v Victoria Vision
7.00pm

THE MATILDAS v SOUTH KOREA

Sat 19 January 2002

Ton. Flood Sports Centre, Bendigo
7.40pm

THE MATILDAS v SOUTH KOREA

Australia Cup tickets will be only available on match day at the venue -

Adults\$6
Concessions\$4
Family (2 adults/2 concs) ...\$15
Children 16yrs & underFREE

Knights sweat over Cantona's \$200,000 fee

By Bert van Bedaf

Former karate-chopping footballer Eric Cantona knows how to charge for his services as the Melbourne Knights are learning to their cost.

Aiming to snare the French, ex Manchester United captain for one or two guest appearances, the Knights may need to fork out \$200,000.

They're said to have offered \$50,000 for a one-off match against South Melbourne at Colonial stadium on February 8.

The 35-year-old Cantona recently played in a testimonial

match for another bete noir of the football world, former Argentina captain Diego Maradona, for which the Frenchman received \$100,000.

It seems news of Cantona's possible guest appearance(s) has leaked prematurely, putting the deal in jeopardy.

"Nothing is finalised yet, but we're keeping the door open until we have a signature," Knights director Miro

Mirkut said.

Knights' general manager Robert Hrzic sounded as cautious. "It's not easy to work this out quickly. Hopefully we will have sorted it out during the week," Hrzic said.



Eric Cantona: His appearance for Melbourne Knights may cost the club \$200,000.

Media Jibes anger Kingz

Football Kingz' general manager Tim Turner last week condemned 'mischievous' reporting of disharmony at the Auckland-based NSL side.

Turner dismissed claims, as of yet unproven, that Kevin Fallon and his assistant, Mike Ruter, had a falling out.

"We've got time for that at the moment," he said. "The club is doing well and we're happy to see the club growing and we're not going to let any of these things get in the way."

"In fact, it's been pretty intense for the team, going through a lot of things. If they put a line at it, even if we disagree, that's no problem at all."

Reports of disharmony and a falling out between Fallon and Ruter have featured in the New Zealand media all through the Christmas holidays.

Turner said a meeting he held with the team last week was not an issue. Turner also said reports of



Kevin Fallon: Football Kingz coach.

a planned meeting between Fallon and Ruter over Ruter's position were untrue.

Ruter said yesterday that he was still the assistant coach but any other questions had to be directed to Turner.

"We've been told not to speak to anybody," he said.

Former Kingz' Jeff Campbell meanwhile rejoined the club after an unhappy spell at Adelaide City. Campbell and was eligible for Friday's win over Olympic Sharks.

Wollongong News

By Otto Bader

Passion Rediscovered - After 12 rounds out of 26, the Wollongong Wolves record showed meagre two wins, three draws, six losses (plus one bye). Nothing to brag about. Quoting the new CEO, Mike Crowe "doing the job better" is the guiding slogan to be adopted by the club from now on.

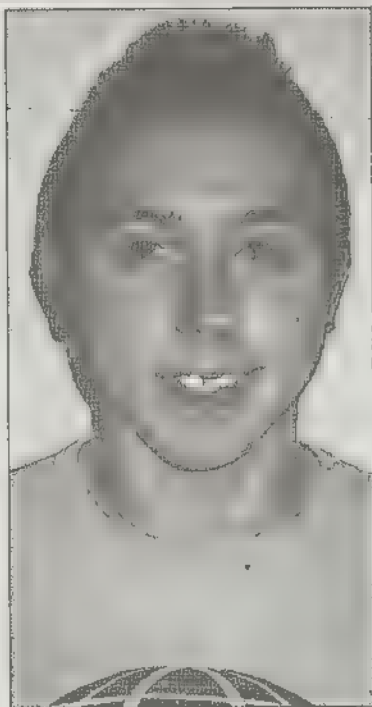
The win over South Melbourne was seen as a restart aiming to climb up the competition ladder. To succeed the players have to find back to a positive outlook, shown passion and pace in their soccer and everything is possible, even believing in winning all remaining 13 games (plus bye) is not out of the question.

Soccer's fortunes create strange twists with surprising results. It is not out of the equation, it can be achieved to reach the top again. Youth, fresh enthusiasm will motivate others to improve performances. Coach Ron Corry knows and realises that, he is a giant in the game of soccer. Been there; done that; nothing can stop him to lead his charges on the way to victory. The club and fans have full confidence in the coach - applauding him to promote young talents to gain experience in senior soccer, paying him back with good players in years to come. The excitement in soccer is its unpredictability. Anything is possible. Even the impossible dream of winning championships.

Illawarra Soccer Club News - Activities start up this week. Soccer clubs advertised their training nights with coaches looking to assemble their best possible squads. Individual club news available is rather sparse at the moment. The ICU Conference League for 2002 now has 16 teams after the withdrawal of Illawarra United, avoiding the dreaded bye.

Viewing various clubs and their preview prospects, it could develop into an interesting competition. Southern-based soccer clubs under the microscope are:

Albion Park - Fourth last season. Reserve Grade 4th also. Youth Grade 12th. New coach this year is David Skeen, a former NSL player with top grade experience, will be out to top the league this year, expecting an improvement on past placing. There is no



Naum Sekulovski: Played an inspiring role in the Wolves' 2-1 win over Northern Spirit over the weekend at WIN Stadium.

reason to see the team not in the front spot this soccer year. 'Skeen' as the new man in charge needs a cool head to sort the squad out and direct them on the way to success. The club's huge junior section must eventually supply potential first graders. A well-organised Management Committee has the experience to work towards promotion. Facilities at Terry Reserve are excellent, the side no doubt has the potential to challenge for the title. The club could form a sound Premier League team in due time.

Warilla Wanderers - Third last season. Reserves 5th. Youth grade 10th. Looking for a new coach at present unless they can talk last year's coach Billy Kyriakidis to continue which does look doubtful. A new committee has been elected, needed badly after some previous turmoil. Preparations so far are unknown, might be a

bit late for an incoming new coach to collect a quality squad. Under circumstances prevailing now one has to question their chances but then again they could spring a surprise if last year's players line up again. Time is short for a proper season preparation. The next few weeks should classify the club's standing and team development. The club has a bunch of loyal supporters, they must put their hands up and assist in rebuilding for the new soccer year.

Shellharbour City - Not well placed at all with the three grades last seasons, under-achievers after a bright beginning, many promising young players were overawed by fierce competition, trying nevertheless their best. A new structure was needed, coaching and management wise. This has been done right after seasons' end with an enthusiastic new President Andy Campbell plus several experienced committee members. One of Illawarra's best creditable soccer coaches Barney King has been contracted who commenced immediately with pre-season trials right through November and December.

Several well known senior players are to join the club, supporting the many talented youngsters. Andy Campbell is excited of the prospects of having now a quality coach in charge and expects to introduce a handful of top first graders soon, he hopes to satisfy the soccer club's major sponsor Shellharbour Workers club, bringing success on the field and off with increased patronage members. The senior club is looking to strong affiliations with two junior soccer clubs - the powerful Oak Flats and Shellharbour Juniors which between them registered over 600 junior players last year, boys and girls, even more could join up this coming season. Head senior coach Barney King sees as one of his aims visits to junior teams training sessions to liaise with individual age group coaches. City has the ambition to seek promotion to higher soccer standard, needing plenty of support from sponsors and fans, aiming in years to come to play on new facilities near the Shellharbour Workers Club. Foundation and potential is available

for them to succeed, prospects are looking good. Naked ambition can carry the side to any goal aimed for.

Barbarians - A newly-created identity. Now purely seniors. Separated from Shellharbour Juniors but did not achieve as much as hoped for. At times the team was playing great soccer but could not maintain the pace. Coach is once more Roberto Hernandez, best known in past years as a feared striker and top grade goal scoring centre forward. He is aiming to inject new enthusiasm and more discipline in his future squad, always optimistic to climb up the competition ladder.

There was some talk of amalgamation with one of the other South based soccer clubs and bring more success to Barrack Heights Sports field which in itself has seen some famous past coaches like John Bingham and successful premiership winning teams. This has not been repeated lately and the prospects are not promising at the moment. Much work needs to be done to ground and facilities, neglected in past seasons. It is hard to see the club becoming

a threat to leading teams this coming soccer year. Coach and Committee have to work together to attract top players and win a better position in the competition.

Berkeley - A famous District Soccer club in past years, producing many quality players representing the area with pride, have now fallen on hard times despite excellent ground facilities and backing by the Berkeley Sports and Social club, the team had a rather poor season.

Halfway through last year Phil Brown took over as coach - a well known Illawarra soccer personality, a great play maker in his days with West Figtree. He will be coach again for the new season and the club has every reason to expect a far better placing this time around. Plenty of junior soccer players are eager to join the senior club in due time and one can see the potential of the side, hungry for success. Well 'Brownie' is the man with a soccer brain who can make it possible for the fans. The club's youth grade

of U/20's finished 5th last year out of 17 teams, indicating there is talent available, ready to step in given the chance to play first grade.

Dapto Soccer Club - with a proud history of successful championships, did not achieve their hopes of a front placing. Incoming new coach Jason Higgs, possible as player-coach, has plenty of match experience in top national competition, could consider his job as a challenge, testing his ability of rebuilding a promising squad. Dapto Juniors should supply enough young players to strengthen the senior team. It is hard to predict how they will improve, it could take time before Dapto growth again to match past glory. The club's Youth team came 8th in the competition and showed some promise, they came through the play-offs to win the First Division Grand final, winning against previously undefeated minor premier University of Wollongong, an astonishing success for the Dapto U/20's. Surely the coach can build on that basis and might promote some of the youngsters to first grade. The soccer club is supported by Dapto Leagues Club, their major sponsor. It won't be long and Dapto Soccer will shine again in district competitions.

South Coast United - No details are available as to coaching staff or management.

ISA View Competition Draw 2002 - the first Board Meeting of Soccer Illawarra is coming up. Since the goal posts have shifted again after the end of year interference by lobby groups pushing personal agendas. The situation is now to be looked at with 12 clubs in ICU Premier League and 16 in ICU Conference League. Originally proposed 14 teams in each division looks logical now but cannot be followed since the member clubs surprisingly voted for 12 and 17 - now 16 - clubs to play only 22 rounds. It would be nice and good for promoting our game to play 26 rounds right through to October. The playing calendar allows enough weekends between February and October to accommodate knock-outs, Cup games and extended competition in both leagues. Let's hope eventual common sense and unity prevails to create a satisfactory round of competition for both league.

On top of the world with Joe Didulica

By Roy Hay

Geelong-born goalkeeper Joe Didulica is on top of the world at the moment.

The 24 year-old made his first team debut for Ajax Amsterdam on 18 December, coming on as substitute for Fred Grim when the veteran keeper was injured very late in the game.

Since then Didulica has had two matches in goals. A stunning full debut at home to Vitesse Arnhem as Ajax won 5-1, then a real baptism of fire away to Utrecht where he was injured after only three minutes, but recovered to play a full game in what turned out to be a 3-1 loss.

All the Utrecht goals came from deflected shots which gave the young keeper little chance of preventing them.

Didulica was home in Geelong for Christmas during the Dutch winter break, and was off again on 5 January for training in Amsterdam followed by two matches in Portugal against teams from the German Bundesliga.

Then the Dutch season resumes and with it Didulica's Personal campaign to become the Number One at Ajax.

The new Ajax coach is former Dutch international skipper and star with Ajax and Barcelona, Ronald Koeman.

He took over from Co Adriaanse midway through the season and is obviously taking his time observing the

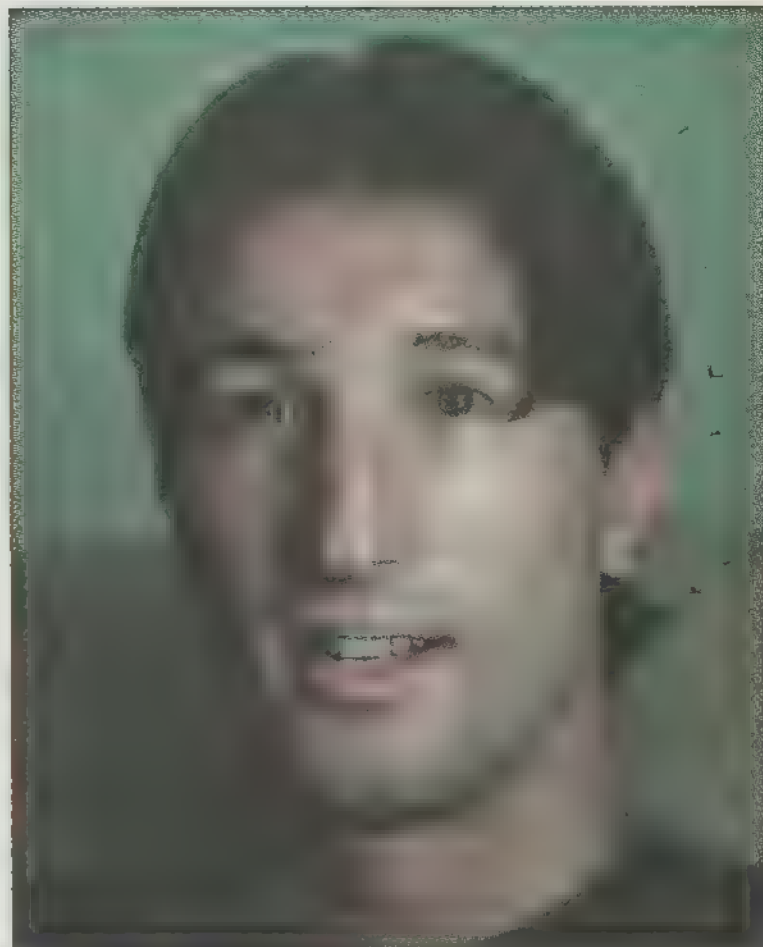
resources at his disposal.

Ajax have a very young side in 2001 with Didulica amazingly one of the older players at 24. Striker Rafael van der Vaart is the top scorer in Holland this season and he is only 18.

Skipper Chivu was the baby of the Romanian team which knocked out England in the European Championships in 2000.

Didulica had a spell on loan to Germinal Beerschot in the Belgian first division, but found that an enormous contrast to Ajax.

The training, the facilities, the professionalism all fell short of what he had become accustomed to in Amsterdam, plus he was promised the goalkeeping



Joe Didulica: Made his full debut for Ajax on December 18.

spot, but then found himself on the bench and had to fight his way into the first team. Hence on his return to Ajax he is even hungrier for success and determined to hold on to the place he has gained.

"The atmosphere in the Amsterdam Arena is unbelievable", he said of his home debut against Vitesse, "The crowd were chanting my name and my teammates were great, saying they had confidence in me and encouraging me throughout the game".

Success has not changed the young keeper. He has not adopted the Ajax swagger and confidence bordering on arrogance which was the trade mark of the side in the days of the de Boer twins, Edgar Davids and Patrick Kluyvert.

"I could not behave like that in Australia. My friends would soon cut me down to size, as would my sister Patricia and brother John", he said.

But he is equally committed to holding down his place in the side and showing that he will be challenging for a place in the Australian side before long. His hopes of playing in the Sydney Olympics were cut short by stress fractures in his shin in the days before the tournament.

While in Australia he went shark-fishing with his brother and thankfully he survived, we can expect to hear much more of the latest in a line of Australian goalkeepers playing at the highest level overseas.

OCEANIA SCRIBE FOR AFRICAN TOURNEY

The daughter of Charles Dempsey, the man blamed when South Africa did not win the 2006 World Cup bid, has been invited to the opening ceremony of the 2002 African Nations Cup in Mali this month.

Josephine King was included on a list of dignitaries released by the African Football Confederation (CAF) in Cairo because of her status as secretary-general of the Oceania Football Association.

It is customary for CAF to invite the secretary-general of each region to the opening of the Nations Cup, a biennial 16-nation showcase of African football.

New Zealand-based Dempsey ignored a mandate from Oceania to back South Africa once England were eliminated in the July 2000 poll, and his abstention from the third round gave Germany a controversial 12-11 victory.

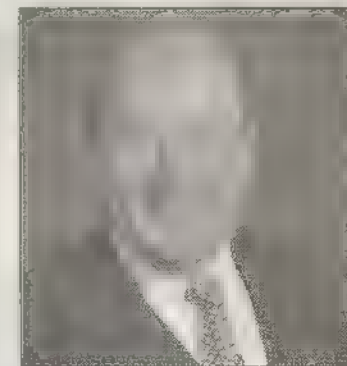
Had Dempsey followed instructions and tied the ballot at 12 votes each, Sepp Blatter, president of world football controlling body FIFA, would have had the decisive vote and he publicly backed South Africa.

South Africa were bidding to become the first African hosts of a quadrennial event first staged 72 years ago. Under a

proposed rotation system, there is hope that Africa will stage the World Cup in 2010.

Other dignitaries set to attend the Nations Cup ceremony include the two most powerful men in world sport - former Swiss army colonel Blatter and International Olympic Committee president Jacques Rogge from Belgium.

The opening ceremony at the March 26 Stadium in Bamako will be followed by a Group A clash between Mali and Liberia, the first of 32 matches spread over 23 days and six venues in the landlocked west African state.



Sepp Blatter: Invited for the African Nations Cup.



Christian Chivu (left): Captain of Ajax and inspirational to Didulica's ambition at the Dutch club.



● Live action from the Sydney Croatian Sports Centre last Sunday night in the battle between Sydney United and Adelaide City. Seen here is United's central marker, Sebastian Sinozic, who made his debut for his new Club, being challenged with a sliding tackle by Adelaide City's striker Scott Tunbridge. The battle ended in a 1-1 draw.

NEW SOUTH WALES PREMIER LEAGUE

www.nswpremierleague.com



FEATURE MATCH

Parramatta Eagles



VS



Fairfield Bulls

KICK-OFF: 6.30pm & 1.30pm, Sunday 10 January 2002
VENUE: Melita Stadium, Everley Road, South Granville

The only Sunday Premier League game in Sydney, fans from far and wide are expected to pack into Melita Stadium for what promises to be a thrilling contest between two of the most attacking sides in the league.

Parramatta Eagles started the New Year well, coming back from 1-0 down early in the second half to defeat a plucky Panthers' outfit 2-1 at Andrews Road Field last Saturday night. Without the services of Anthony Mondello, Coach Tam Finlayson was forced to change his lineup partnering Daniel Kukucka with Jimmy Bakis on the forward line. The move paid dividends and with the expected absence of Mondello again this week, that partnership could well decide the outcome of this game.

"Anthony has a foot injury," said Finlayson, "and

we don't expect him to be back in the next couple of weeks. Meanwhile, Jimmy Bakis and Daniel Kukucka have been holding the fort and doing a good job, and we don't feel we have lost too much there at all."

The Eagles have lost just one game in their past five starts and have not been beaten at 'fortress' Melita all season, a record that is not lost on their coach. "Our record at home has been great, in fact we have held our opponents scoreless in three of those four home games and conceded just one goal," said Finlayson. "It's a good record and one the boys are keen to continue."

Fairfield was a tad unlucky last week when they drew 2-2 with the visiting Belconnen side. Defender cum striker Jason Connolly snared the Bulls' two goals but sadly they allowed the visitors' two

late goals to split the points. The draw was not what coach Craig Sharpley would have wanted given that the Bulls are in the midst of a difficult run of matches.

"This game is one of a tough four week period for us and we are going to have to be at our absolute best to make an impact," said Sharpley. "We have a few injury and suspension concerns going through this month so I'll be looking to our squad players to step in and fill some gaps as we need too." The Bulls have also put together a four game unbeaten run where they have conceded just two goals, their last loss coming way back in late November.

"Our form has been good," said Sharpley, "but we can never be too complacent, especially against a quality team like Parramatta. They will be very hard to beat but I am confident we can make an impact."

SQUADS

EAGLES: 1 Jason Holmes 2. Daniel Borg 3. Geoff Dwyer, 4. Malcolm Meixak 5. Mark Reveley 6. Mirko Juric 7. Mauricio Isas 8. Daniel Kukucka 9. Anthony Mondello, 10. Tony Mitiga 11. Jim Bakis, 13. Paul O'Grady, 12. Glenn Sprod, 14. Stephen Chippis 15. Ben Deicata 16. Geoff Howarth 19. Daniel Gummis 21. Joel Morgan, **Coach:** Tam Finlayson

BULLS: 1 Frank Mikjetic 3. Mathew Dihm 4. Paul Bourke, 6. Paul Richardson, 7. Ray Younis, 8. Stewart Van Bentum, 9. Marc Hoenselaars, 10. Mathew Borg, 11. Richard Hamson, 12. Tom Marc, 13. Adam Snyder 14. Ismael Arrarte, 15. Pat Darvill, 16. Andy Ravanello 17. Craig Sharpley, 18. Leo Carle, 19. Jason Connolly 20. Ali Akbal, 21. Fernando Pellegrino, **Coach:** Craig Sharpley

Fairfield Bulls' Coach Craig Sharpley: "This game is one of a tough four week period for us and we are going to have to be at our absolute best to make an impact".

PARRAMATTA EAGLES are proudly sponsored by Parramatta Leagues Club and Bank of Valletta

PREMIER LEAGUE

ROUND 10

Saturday January 12

1st Grade U19

C'bury M'ville	vs	Bonnyngg WE	Serbian Centre	7.00pm	5.00pm
Belconnen BD	vs	Leichhardt Tigers	W Belconnen SG	6.30pm	4.30pm
Central Coasties	vs	St George Saints	Plum Park	7.00pm	5.00pm
S'land Sharks	vs	Bankstown City	Seymour Shaw	7.00pm	5.00pm
Penrith Panthers	vs	Blacktown City	Andrews Rd Fld	7.00pm	5.30pm

Sunday January 13

P'matta Eagles	vs	Fairfield Bulls	Melita Stadium	6.30pm	4.30pm
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ROUND 11

Saturday January 19

1st Grade U19

St George	vs	Belconnen BD	St George Std	6.30pm	4.30pm
Fairfield Bulls	vs	Penrith Panthers	Nineveh Field	7.00pm	5.00pm
Bonnyngg WE	vs	Central Coast	Serbian Centre	7.00pm	5.00pm
Bankstown City	vs	C'bury M'ville	Jensen Park	7.00pm	5.00pm
Blacktown City	vs	S'land Sharks	Gabbie Stadium	7.00pm	5.00pm

Sunday January 20

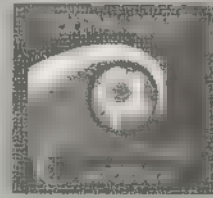
1st Grade U19

Leichhardt Tigers	vs	P'matta Eagles	Lambert Park	5.00pm	**
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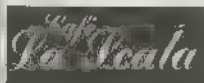
**Grade 19 to play Wed 13th Feb 7.00pm Lambert Park

NEWS FLASH!!

Bankstown City President George Jackson, 640, after winning a \$200 bet against both Brian Owen and Ken Schombert following the Lions' 4-2 win against Blacktown. Match Report on Page 25



The Cafe La Scala Player of the Week after Round 9 of the NSW Premier League is:



Paul Wearne of Bankstown City Lions

"Cafe La Scala is located at

Shop 32, Piazza Level, Italian Forum,

23 Norton St, Leichhardt Phone: (02) 9572 8577



Inside ... Inside ...

- From The SidelinesP20
- Match Reports.....P24-25
- Central Coast Coasties in focus.....P21
- Scoreboard.....P22



NSW Premier League



PREVIEW ROUND TEN

PREMIER LEAGUE ACTION RETURNS TO PLUIM PARK!



Central Coast Coasties

VS

St George Saints



KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 12 January 2002

VENUE: Plum Park, Tuggerah St, Lisarow (Central Coast)

A must win game for the Coasties if they still harbour any thoughts for playing in the post season.

The home side should be favoured for the points, however the Coasties have had more ups and downs than a fiddler's elbow in recent weeks and anything is possible.

St. George posted a draw last week against Canterbury and from all reports had the better of the match.

However, with only two draws from nine starts, one would have to favour the home side.

SQUADS

COASTIES: 1. Matthew Collits, 2. Sean Matthews, 3. Marcus Steele, 4. Danny Burt, 5. Mitchell Daley, 6. Dane Hokin, 7. Peter Preston, 8. Adam Peatey, 9. Damien Smith, 10. Mick Williams, 11. Karl Freeman, 12. Peter Leary, 13. Peter Ritchie, 14. Andrew Clark, 15. Pat Bradley, 22. Darren Moore, **Coach:** Dale Eggleton

SAINTS: 1. Stacy Alogdellis, 2. Mark Barlamis, 3. Nick Boliantitis, 4. Angelo Petratos, 5. Max Sevares, 6. Spyros Kladis, 7. George Maglis, 8. Joshua Rufo, 9. Achilles Markopoulos, 11. John Fotiadis, 12. Fabio Macolino, 13. Nabil Codmani, 14. Steven Papadopoulos, 15. Nick Mandic, 16. Simon Verrender, 17. Manny Spanoudakis, 18. Sai Zullo, 19. Mladen Damjanovic, 21. Brad Campbell, 22. John Christou, **Coach:** Manny Spanoudakis

CENTRAL COAST COASTIES ARE PROUDLY SPONSORED BY
Central Coast Leagues Club



Sutherland Sharks

VS

Bankstown City Lions



KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 12 January 2002

VENUE: Seymour Shaw Park, The Boulevard, Miranda

After a slow start to the season, Sutherland has seemingly turned the corner, posting their first win against St. George and holding the league leader's Bonnyrigg to a 1-0 scoreline.

With the game at Seymour Shaw, Coach Billy McColl is confident his side can bring the Lions unstuck with a blend of tough defence and some hard running forwards. If Bankstown is to mount a run for the Top Five, they must beat the Sharks, but on their recent form that could be easier said than done.

SQUADS

SHARKS: 1. Dennes Olla, 2. Peter Feehan, 3. Alen Stajic, 4. David O'Han, 5. Ben Short, 6. Dean Heffernan, 7. Jamie Danaskos, 8. Monte Pfrengle, 9. Alex Pfrengle, 10. Steve Cklamovski, 11. Kris Karanasos, 12. Dean Spresian, 13. Ambrose Mancia, 14. Andy Watts, 15. Colin McAusland, 16. Kire Josevski, 17. Bill Petrovski, 20. Sam LaMacchia, 21. Mitchell Blowes, **Coach:** Billy McColl

LIONS: 1. Zlatko Josevski, 2. Sefer Yildiz, 3. Richard Luksic, 4. Bryan Raeburn, 5. Anthony Kanaan, 6. Paul Weame, 7. George Issa, 8. Robert Issa, 9. Goce Trposki, 10. Iain MacDonald, 11. Alex Trposki, 12. Adam Mammoliti, 13. Saso Boskovski, 14. Freddy Umlil, 15. Damien Luksic, 16. Colin Luff, 17. Steven Dimitrievski, 18. Dong-K Kim, 19. Robert Angievski, 20. Cem Akili, **Coach:** Ljube Jancev

SUTHERLAND SHARKS are proudly sponsored by Pipe King, Bezzina's Development, Callex, Howard Water Proofing, Knock-out Shoes, Realco Glass and Aluminium, Man-Lin-Wah Restaurant



Penrith Panthers

VS

Blacktown City Demons



KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 12 January 2002

VENUE: Andrews Road Field, Andrews Road, Penrith

The Panthers are no easy beats and seem to grow an extra leg at home these days.

They held the lead against Parramatta last week but were run down late in the second half showing enough to suggest that they will be more than a handful for the Demons this weekend. Blacktown Coach Brian Brown was an interested spectator at Andrews Road last week and is confident he has a strategy to dent the hard running Panthers and start the Demons' push back into the Top Five.

SQUADS

PANTHERS: 1. Chad Taylor, 2. Jon Hawkins, 3. Chris Giometti, 4. Glenn Meliak, 5. Ben Wright, 6. Daniel Wells, 7. Dave Gardiner, 8. Paul Marosevic, 9. Rod Hutchinson, 10. Osvaldo El Ali, 11. Luke O'Connell, 12. Christian Lima, 13. Jason Sciberras, 14. Wayne Berrigan, 15. Danny Hinton, 17. Shane Hammond, 18. Gustavo Orcajo, 20. Tim O'Connell, 21. Ryan Noble, 25. Marty McCaffery, 26. Luke Boyd, 24. Kurt Van Arkels, **Coach:** Tony Rasmussen

DEMONS: 1. John Crawley, 2. Paul Yates, 3. Damien Foxe, 4. Peter Serranni, 5. Ben Willard, 6. Damon Langan, 7. Paul Dee, 8. Darren Iocca, 9. Kain Rastali, 10. Naoki Imaaya, 11. Jim Nikas, 12. Zlatko Donev, 13. Steve Riches, 14. David Reid, 15. Mark Hagger, 16. Patrick Gatt, 17. Luciano Berbis, 18. Graeme O'Donnell, 19. Chad Lewis, 20. James Wilkinson, **Coach:** Brian Brown

PENRITH PANTHERS ARE PROUDLY SPONSORED BY Panthers World of Entertainment, Allied Pickfords, Business Reflections, Prospero Credit Union, Wizard Home Loans, Sodasports, Bonus Plus (Panthers World of Entertainment), Panatolis Pizza Pasta (Main Lobby, Panthers World of Entertainment), Penrith Press, Hawkesbury Radio 89.7



Belconnen Blue Devils

VS

Leichhardt Tigers



KICK-OFF: 8.30pm & 4.30pm, Saturday 12 January 2002

VENUE: West Belconnen Sports Ground, Hardwick Crescent, Holt (ACT)

Belconnen stretched their unbeaten run to six games with a 2-2 draw at Fairfield last Saturday night.

Striker Steve Lazzari again got himself on the scoresheet and his match up against the Tigers' new boy in Derek Poimer will be one to watch. The Blue Devils only have a fifty percent winning record this season at home and Coach Lino Fiorese knows this game is a must win if they are to continue a charge towards the Top Three.

SQUADS

BLUE DEVILS: 1. Anthony Giannasca, 2. Toplica Popovich, 3. Matthew Cachia, 4. Elliot Zwangobani, 5. Nic Purdue, 6. Shane Lyons, 8. Michael Katz, 9. Stephen Lazzari, 10. Daniel Macor, 11. David Arranz, 12. Jaime Mauro, 13. Stewart Camara, 14. Elia Sailoum, 15. Adrian Dowling, 16. Oscar Zamora, 17. Stephen Kemp, 18. Lee Pietrukowski, 19. Daniel Camara, 20. Rade Kosanovic, **Coach:** Lino Fiorese

TIGERS: 1. Andrew Crews, 2. Kevin Foster, 3. Joe Moric, 4. Ross Kethel, 5. Steven Livingstone, 6. Michael Galluzzo, 7. Joe Bruni, 8. James Stubbs-Mills, 9. Alan Picken, 10. Steve Karavatakis, 11. Sam La Rocca, 12. Jeremy Brown, 13. Andrew Faras, 15. Ryan Jones, 16. Anthony Tesoro, 17. Jason Lal, 20. John Paul Boutros, 23. Derek Poimer, **Coach:** Les De Celis



NSW Premier League



FROM THE SIDELINES with Greg Stock and Paul Goodwin

PENRITH PANTHERS have welcomed back Danny Hinton to their squad after missing the start of the 2001/2002 season due to family commitments.

After finishing third in the 1999 Gold Medal to Jim Nikas, by his own admission Hinton had a lean season in the inaugural Premier League in 2000/2001, but he has returned with much enthusiasm and is added bonus for Panthers' Coach Tony Rassmussen.

Hinton has been impressed with the attitude of the new youthful Panthers, and is keen to add some experience to the squad to allow them to continue to develop. Rassmussen has been concerned with his striking depth, and sees Hinton as a great bonus to fill the void and will work well with his existing strikers Rod Hutchinson and Tim O'Connell.

Holiday boy Ben Wright is still overseas enjoying the good life, but the Panthers expect him back shortly.

Adding to the Panthers' squad depth is the return of Glenn Meilak. Meilak has been out since the Panthers' last pre-season trial against Fairfield Bulls.

LEICHHARDT TIGERS have signed Derek Poimer. He made his debut in a friendly against Bankstown two Sundays ago scoring in a 3-1 win to the Tigers.

The club has parted company with Zoki Adioski. Apparently Adioski wanted to play as a striker but Coach Les De Celis could not accommodate him with so many strikers at his disposal now.

NEWS OF THE CENTRAL COAST club and their former NSW Player of the Year, Peter Preston.

Preston and his fiancée Melissa, their son Jordan



New Leichhardt Tiger, Derek Poimer.

and Peter's mother Carol had a pretty scary Xmas Day.

They travelled to Peter's brother's house at Luddenham to have a family Xmas dinner and get together and had to evacuate the house because of bushfires.

A house about 100 metres along the road was burnt to the ground and they had to sit in the car surrounded by flames and smoke for about an hour waiting for the all clear.

When they returned to the house luckily it was undamaged but everything around was burnt to a cinder. In trying to go back to the Central Coast they had to drive through flames and thick smoke and do a long detour.

A usual hour and a half's journey took over three

hours, but thankfully all arrived home safely.

PARRAMATTA EAGLES will hold their annual elections for office bearers this coming Sunday (13th) having called for nominations exactly one week earlier on Sunday morning at 10.

The president, Doris Drewery, who took over from acting President Frank Sant in 1997 and John Comito, the Secretary, will be up for re-election.

The Melita club has always been democratic and annual elections are often strongly contested.

BANKSTOWN CITY was one of a number of clubs that had a tough festive season. New Coach Ljube Jancev is working on a new 'attacking' strategy in a bid to get the side firing

and moving up the ladder, which meant than the Lions' first grade squad spent most of their time on the training paddock.

It was the same with last week's combatants Blacktown City who also worked hard during the two-week layoff, training twice each week under Coach Brian Brown. The Demons also played a trial against NSL side Parramatta Power on the Saturday before Christmas, which was a good hitout for the team.

"We lost 4-0," said Brown, "but we had some chances and it wasn't until late in the game that we conceded some goals, but overall I have been extremely happy with our efforts during the break." Brown is also expected to make a decision this week on ex-NSL midfielder Mike Smith who is approaching full fitness.

CONTRARY to speculation, NSW and FAIRFIELD BULLS' midfielder Leo Carle is still an integral part of Coach Craig Sharpley's 2001/2 premier-ship campaign.

According to Sharpley, rumours surrounding Carle's dropping to the under 19s for the game against Sutherland, are exactly that, rumours, and he has been more than impressed with the way Carle has been playing and training.

"I dropped Leo for the Sutherland match after an ordinary game against Blacktown, but since then he has trained the house down and I have been impressed by his attitude and professionalism since."

SUTHERLAND Coach Billy McColl gave his side a mixed festive period, giving his players some much needed time off, but also electing to train a couple of nights per week in expectation of the Sharks' tough January campaign.

After breaking their duck against St. George in Round Eight, the Sharks will be more than nuisance value to any side expecting an easy time of things.

PRIOR to Round Nine, while most of the attention this season has been on the Premier League strikers, spare a thought for some of the goalkeepers who are also enjoying a 'purple patch' in form. When it comes to counting cleansheets, there are a number of goalkeepers who are starting to rack up some healthy numbers at this early stage of the season.

Out of the twelve teams, only four sides have not kept a clean sheet and they just happen to be the bottom four sides, Canterbury, Penrith, St. George and Sutherland.

Of the other eight, Parramatta Eagles' skipper Jason Holmes is leading the



Melissa Ollier and Peter Preston pictured here celebrating Peter's Gold Medal win in 1999, had a narrow escape from the raging bushfires.

way with four cleansheets from eight starts, followed by five players each with 3 cleansheets, Anthony Giannasca (Belconnen), John Crawley (Blacktown City), Frank Mikuletic (Fairfield Bulls), David Aceski (Bonnyrigg WE) and Andrew Crews (Leichhardt Tigers). Of these players Aceski is out for the season with a broken leg

while Frank Mikuletic notched his three all in successive weeks against Sutherland, Canterbury and the Central Coast. Other goalkeepers to make an impact include Central Coast goalkeeper Darren Moore with 2 and Zlatko Josevski with one. Over the remaining weeks of the season, we will keep you updated as to their progress.

Canterbury-Marrickville Olympic

V

Bonnyrigg White Eagles

KICK-OFF: 7pm & 5pm, Saturday 12 January 2002

VENUE: Serbian Centre, 13 Simpson Road, Bonnyrigg

Only the most supreme optimist would give the Berries any chance in this one, but stranger things have happened.

One draw from their past six starts is not a good form line given that your meeting the undefeated league leaders. Midfielder Greg Collins is expected to be rushed back into the Berries' starting side following a back injury, which forced his withdrawal from the St George game.

Bonnyrigg were a little rusty against Sutherland last week, but still managed a 1-0 win to remain undefeated after nine rounds. Tayfun Devrimol, Fernando Greco and Michael Hawrysiuk are all back following lengthy injury/suspension layoffs giving the White Eagles' squad some extra depth.

SQUADS

OLYMPIC: 1 George Bouhoutsos 2 Greg Collins 3 Christian Ortiz 4 John Maniopoulos 5 Mark D'Alessandro 6 Andy Amegashie 7 Cor Paradis 8 Yane Talceviski 9 Mark Beldham 10 Hussein Lomaa 11 Aneleas Kotsopoulos 12 John Pilemer 14 Mite Talceviski 15 Emmanuel Papageorgiou 16 Angelo Markopoulos 17 Marcelo Guerrero 18 Al. Saim 19 Michael Klads 20 Les Bihari. **Coach:** John Xipolitas

WHITE EAGLES: 1 Fernando Greco 2 Sasha Ujasesenovic 4 Bobby Dragas 5 Tayfun Devrimol 6 Vuko Tomasevic 7 Javier Marcno 8 David Harding 9 Shane Knight 10 Christopher Bradley 11 Johnny Ghiso 13 Robert Gomez 14 Leigh Guntr 15 Peter Oklamovski 16 Michael Hawrysiuk 17 Jimmy Aschler 18 John Kynazopoulos 20 David Aceski 22 Rajko Mandic 23. Devrim Huseyin. **Coach:** Greg Woodhouse

NEW SOUTH WALES PREMIER LEAGUE

PRODUCTION: Arvind Hickman, Emma Nwaneri, Elly Vea, Mary Quartly
CO-ORDINATOR: Binesh Mudaliar
WRITERS: Greg Stock, Paul Goodwin, Claire Killeen, Lezette Isaac, Ray Sandell, Nick Guotn
PHOTOGRAPHY: Carlos Furtado

★ All information is courtesy of the New South Wales Soccer Federation.

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CANBERRA MARRICKVILLE OLYMPIC - BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES

Olympic Airways & Merakis Tailors

NSW Premier League

CLUB FOCUS

By Ray Sandell

The Coasties have been around since 1982 when they were formed by the Central Coast Soccer Association as their representative team.

The club originally played in the Northern NSW competition and had minor success but in 1989

policy has been to promote the local young soccer players and in this area they have been very successful

The youth teams won promotion to the Super Youth competition in 1999 after strong performances in 1st Division and whilst having to play against much stronger Sydney based clubs have always performed competitively and will be one of the clubs represented in the new Premier Youth League competition to commence in 2002

The club has produced many young players that have gone on to success in more senior grades of football.

Jamie McMaster is now playing with Leeds United and has represented England at under 17 and 19 levels.

Goalkeeper Jess Van Stratten played in the under 17 Joeys team in 1999, and everybody will remember his fantastic performance in the Final against Brazil, when the Aussies went down on penalty kicks

After a short period with Northern Spirit, Jess signed a contract with the mighty Juventus of Italy.

Another young Coastie goalie, Jacob Rex, has followed Jess's path and was chosen to play for the Joeys in the last under 17 World Cup and also has a big future ahead of him.

Former Coasties' players such as Glenn Sprod, Andrew Clark, Damien Brown, Jason Holmes and present assistant coach Andrew Olier have played, or are still playing, in the National League

Players such as Paul Roberts, Shane Knight, Peter Preston, Darren Moore and the rising new star, Dane Hokin, have all been selected to represent the State in various senior teams

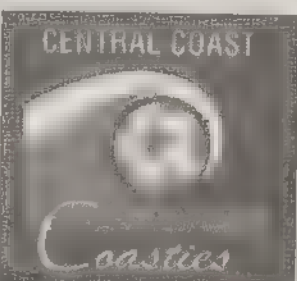
Over the past few seasons success has come to the under 21 and under 19 teams, who were Minor

Premiers and beaten grand finalists respectively in the 2000 Super League competition.

The present Premier League season sees the under 19 performing very strongly.

Apart from Dane Hokin young players to look out for in the future are Peter Leary and Matt Collits from the present first grade squad and most of the current under 19 team under the captaincy of Marc Falzon, winner of last season's NSW Federation "Under 19 player of the year" award.

Whilst speaking of awards the



club has won the "Fair Play Award" five times in the past ten years, twice in 1st Division, twice in Super League and last year in the inaugural Premier League. In 1999, Peter Preston was awarded the Federation's "Player of the Year Gold Medal" in Super League and in last year's Premier League Darren Moore was elected "Goalkeeper of the Year".

In 1998 the club decided that their future was being held back

by retaining their representative status with the Central Coast Soccer Association, and decided to form an incorporated company in its own right and so the Central Coast Coasties Soccer Club was born.

The club remains an affiliated member of the Association and still plays on the Association's ground at Plum Park, Lisarow that is also the CCSA's headquarters.

The club has a small, but exceptionally hard working management team led by long serving Chairman Geoff Eggleton.

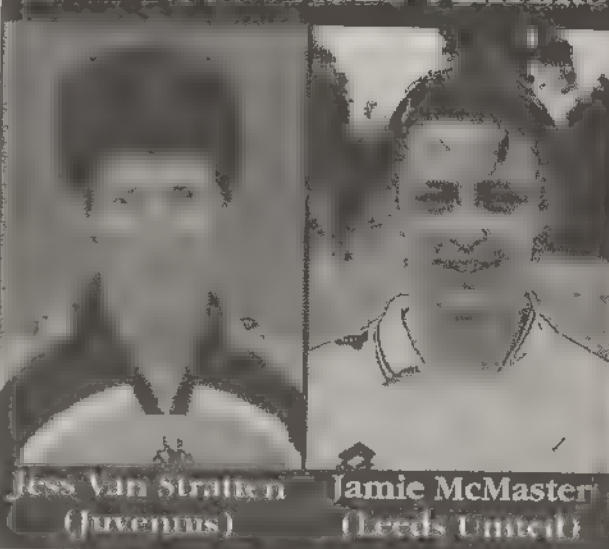
They are also very lucky to have a very experienced club secretary in Joe Spiteri who knows the local soccer scene as well as anybody.

Financial Director, Suzanne Isaac-Cole, is employed in the banking industry and is therefore fully qualified to look after the club's finances.

Last winter season the club, for the first time, entered girls youth and women's teams in the Federation competitions and a sub committee was formed under the leadership of Christine Hornery and so gave the club a coverage of all aspects of the code.

The club's present coach, Dale Eggleton, played over 300 games for the club in the nineties, and remarkably all were in first grade, and is a 'Coastie Legend'.

FORMER COASTIES PLAYERS



Together with Andrew Olier, who played nearly 200 games, they are both learning their coaching trade but, being well known in the Central Coast area, and in the soccer fraternity generally, have been able to get a number of experienced players to sign up for the club this year.

Under 19 Coach John McLafferty has been with the club a number of years handling the young players and is the quiet achiever of the coaching staff.

Head Coach Eggleton is ecstatic at the number of young players that have come through the Coasties' ranks over the years and

have gone on to much higher success

He is of the opinion that the present crop of junior and youth talent playing for the club will add even more players to this already impressive list.

He adds, "The club can look forward to the future with plenty of hope and enthusiasm"

Playing at this level of soccer affords the young players of both the Central Coast and Newcastle regions the opportunity to play in the second highest league in the country and go on to much greater things."

One of best young players in NSW, Central Coast's Dane Hokin.

applied for entry to the NSW Federation and were placed in 3rd Division where they were runners up in both 1st and Under 19 grades. They were immediately promoted to 2nd Division and in 1992 were granted 1st Division status.

Good performances over the next few years saw the club win the first grade premiership together with being runners up in both the Under 21 and Under 18 grades in 1995 and the next season they were promoted to the Super League.

They performed consistently rather than exceptionally over the next five seasons and in 2000,1 were given a position in the new Premier League Summer Soccer competition.

Wherever possible the club's

PLUIM PARK



Home ground of the Central Coast Coasties.



NSW Premier League



SCOREBOARD

ROUND 9

PREMIER LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

ST GEORGE SAINTS .....1 (Jade Pernal 44m)	CANT-M'VILLE OLYMPIC ....1 (Con Paradisis 91 pen)
PENRITH PANTHERS ....1 (Rod Hutchinson 48m)	PARRAMATTA EAGLES ....2 (Jim Bakis 60m, Geoff Dwyer 72m)
FAIRFIELD BULLS .....2 (Jason Connolly 55m/75m)	BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS .2 (Daniel Camara 76m, Steve Lazzan 85m)
BONNYRIGG WE .....1 (Shane Knight 81m)	SUTHERLAND SHARKS ....0
LEICHHARDT TIGERS ....4 (Steve Karavatakis 32m/90m, Sam La Rocca 46m, Derek Pomer 77m)	CENTRAL COAST .....0
BANKSTOWN CITY .....4 (Anthony Kanaan 42m pen, Colin Luff 48m/56m, Goce Tiposki 80m)	BLACKTOWN CITY .....3 (Naoki Iwaya 10m, Steve Riches 39m, Kain Rastall 55m)

UNDER 19

FAIRFIELD BULLS .....3	BELCONNEN BD .....2
BONNYRIGG WE .....3	SUTHERLAND SHARKS ....1
PENRITH PANTHERS ....2	PARRAMATTA EAGLES ....2
BANKSTOWN CITY .....2	BLACKTOWN CITY .....0
LEICHHARDT TIGERS ....1	CENTRAL COAST .....2

ST GEORGE SAINTS VS CANT-M'VILLE - NO RESULT

TABLES

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	9	8	1	0	27	8	25
Leichhardt Tigers	9	6	2	1	16	10	20
Parramatta Eagles	9	6	0	3	26	12	18
Fairfield Bulls	9	5	2	2	14	15	17
Belconnen Blue Devils	9	5	1	3	20	12	16
Blacktown City	9	5	0	4	23	16	15
Bankstown City Lions	9	3	3	3	14	20	12
Canterbury Marrickville	9	2	2	5	11	18	8
Central Coast Coasties	9	2	2	5	7	19	8
Penrith Panthers	9	1	4	4	12	15	7
Sutherland Sharks	9	1	1	7	8	19	4
St George Saints	9	0	2	7	5	19	2

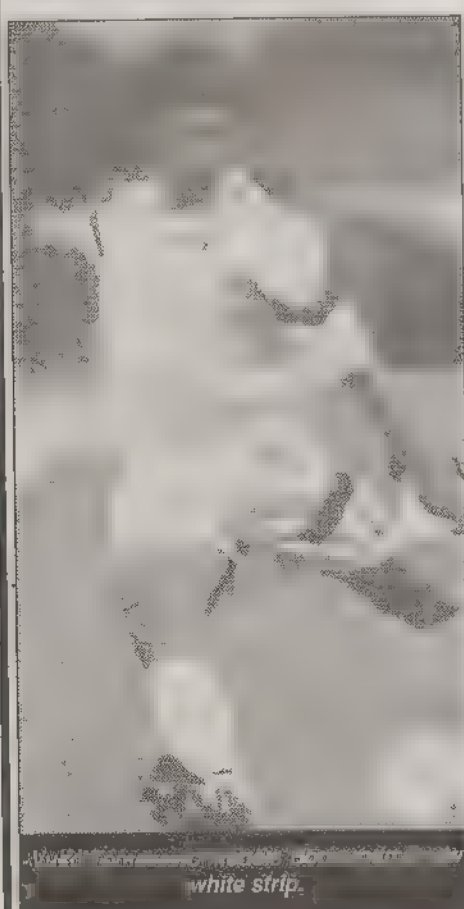
UNDER 19

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Central Coast Coasties	9	7	1	1	24	5	22
Leichhardt Tigers	9	7	1	1	20	5	22
Blacktown City Demons	9	6	1	2	17	10	19
Parramatta Eagles	9	5	1	3	12	10	16
Fairfield Bulls	9	4	3	2	17	14	15
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	9	4	0	5	13	18	12
Belconnen Blue Devils	9	3	2	4	22	20	11
Penrith Panthers	9	2	3	4	11	13	9
Canterbury Marrickville	8	2	2	4	12	14	8
St George Saints	8	2	2	4	5	15	8
Bankstown City Lions	9	2	0	7	5	20	6
Sutherland Sharks	9	1	0	8	11	25	3

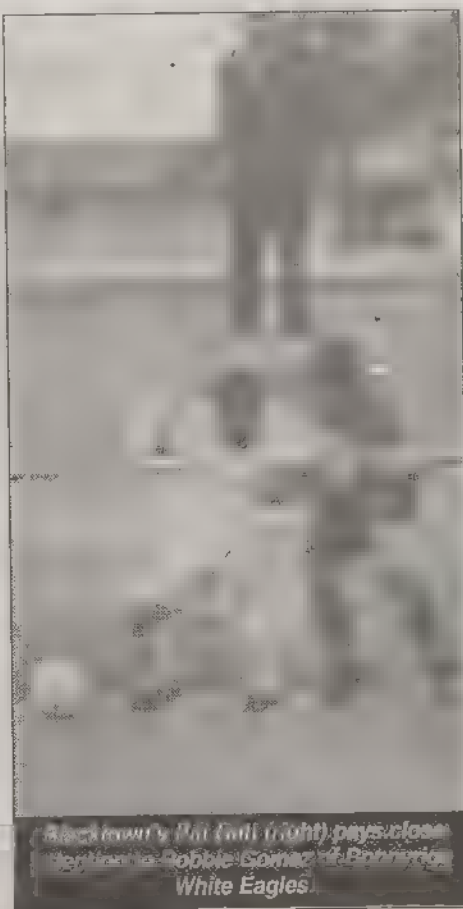
TOP SCORERS

Player	Team	Goals
Steve Karavatakis	Leichhardt Tigers	90
Sam La Rocca	St George Saints	46
Derek Pomer	Leichhardt Tigers	77
Anthony Kanaan	Bankstown City	42
Colin Luff	Bankstown City	48
Goce Tiposki	Bankstown City	80
Jim Bakis	Parramatta Eagles	60
Geoff Dwyer	Parramatta Eagles	72
Con Paradisis	Cant-M'ville Olympic	91
Daniel Camara	Belconnen Blue Devils	76
Steve Lazzan	Belconnen Blue Devils	85
Shane Knight	Bonnyrigg WE	81
Naoki Iwaya	Blacktown City	10
Steve Riches	Blacktown City	39
Kain Rastall	Blacktown City	55

Blacktown City vs Bonnyrigg WE From Round 8



Blacktown City's Robbie Gomez (left) pays close attention to Bonnyrigg's white strip.



Blacktown City's Robbie Gomez (left) pays close attention to Bonnyrigg's white strip.



Blacktown City's Robbie Gomez (left) pays close attention to Bonnyrigg's white strip.



Blacktown City's Robbie Gomez (left) pays close attention to Bonnyrigg's white strip.



NSW Premier League



2002 OCEANIA UNDER 16 TOURNAMENT



JANUARY 15-24, 2002
VALENTINE SPORTS PARK, GLENWOOD
HOME OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES SOCCER FEDERATION
THE DRAW



GROUND NO	DATE	MATCH NO	KICK OFF TIME	POOL	TEAM A	TEAM B	GROUND NO	DATE	MATCH NO	KICK OFF TIME	POOL	TEAM A	TEAM B
2	15th Jan	1	2:30	A	Samoa	Cook Islands	2	21st Jan	21	6:00	A	AUSTRALIA	Tonga
2	15th Jan	2	4:30	A	Solomon Is	AUSTRALIA	2	21st Jan	22	4:00	A	Cook Is.	Solomon Is.
	15th Jan			A	Tonga	Bye		21st Jan			A	Samoa	Bye
1	15th Jan	3	1:45	B	PNG	New Caledonia	1	21st Jan	23	2:00	B	Vanuatu	New Caledonia
1	15th Jan	4	3:45	B	Vanuatu	A. Samoa	1	21st Jan	24	4:00	B	N. Zealand	PNG
1	15th Jan	5	5:45	B	Fiji	New Zealand	1	21st Jan	25	6:00	B	A. Samoa	Fiji
1	16th Jan	6	6:00	A	Samoa	Solomon Is.	1	22nd Jan	27	2:00	11th	6th placed	Local Youth Side
1	16th Jan	7	4:00	A	Tonga	Cook Islands					Pool B		
	16th Jan			A	AUSTRALIA	Bye	1	22nd Jan	28	4:00	9th/10th	5th placed	5th placed
2	16th Jan	8	2:00	B	A. Samoa	New Zealand					Pool A	Pool B	
2	16th Jan	9	4:00	B	Fiji	New Caledonia	1	22nd Jan	29	6:00	S/F 4	3rd placed	4th placed
2	16th Jan	10	6:00	B	PNG	Vanuatu					Pool A	Pool B	
	17th Jan		REST		DAY		2	22nd Jan	30	2:00	S/F 3	3rd placed	4th placed
2	18th Jan	11	6:00	A	Cook Is.	AUSTRALIA					Pool B	Pool A	
2	18th Jan	12	4:00	A	Tonga	Samoa	2	22nd Jan	31	4:00	S/F 2	1st placed	2nd placed
	18th Jan			A	Solomon Is.	Bye					Pool A	Pool B	
1	18th Jan	13	4:00	B	PNG	Fiji	2	22nd Jan	32	6:00	S/F 1	1st placed	2nd placed
1	18th Jan	14	6:00	B	N. Zealand	Vanuatu					Pool B	Pool A	
1	18th Jan	15	2:00	B	N. Caledonia	A. Samoa		23rd Jan—		REST	DAY		
1	19th Jan	16	6:00	A	Solomon Is.	Tonga							
1	19th Jan	17	4:00	A	AUSTRALIA	Samoa							
	19th Jan			A	Cook Is.	Bye							
2	19th Jan	18	6:00	B	Vanuatu	Fiji							
2	19th Jan	19	4:00	B	A. Samoa	PNG							
2	19th Jan	20	2:00	B	N. Caledonia	New Zealand							
	20th Jan		REST		DAY								

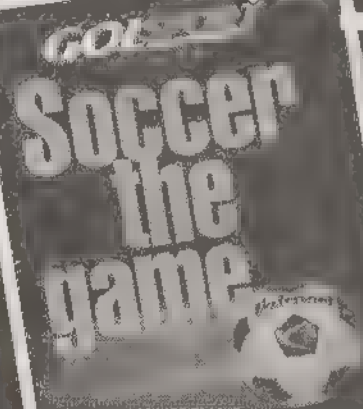
NOTE: THE FINAL DAY OF MATCHES IS ON THE 24TH OF JANUARY 2002
DETAILS WILL BE RELEASED SHORTLY

NOTE: THE FINAL DAY OF MATCHES IS ON THE 24TH OF JANUARY 2002
DETAILS WILL BE RELEASED SHORTLY

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NSW Premier League



Bonnyrigg WE 1 Sutherland Sharks 0

By Claire Killean

In a game that even the Sutherland Sharks' faithful predicted would be a white wash, the end score line and the resolve of certain Sharks' players held the Bonnyrigg White Eagles at bay until the final 10 minutes.

The Saturday night encounter showed the negative effects of the Christmas break with the usually elusive White Eagles lacking the consistency and scoring ability which has seen them rise to be competition leader's and remain undefeated.

The White Eagles were camped inside the Sharks' half in the first set of 45 minutes with Bonnyrigg goalkeeper Ivan Necevski

touching the ball a mere three times in the 45 minutes!

Though the White Eagles were below their best, the Sharks were good in defence, particularly when they defended for the majority of the game. Goalkeeper Mitchell Blowes enhancing his reputation as one of the best outside the National League.

The only goal of the game came in the 81st minute. With the White Eagles probing all night it seemed only a matter of time when the goal would be scored. Vuko Tomasevic fired the ball towards the direction of goal only to find Blowes, who dived to the right to stop the ball. Yet, Shane Knight followed up taking the rebound and slotting it in for a White Eagles' goal and victory.

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 (Shane Knight 81st m)
Sutherland Sharks 0

Bonnyrigg: Necevski, Utjesenovic, Huseyin, Tomasevic, Kyriazopoulos, Knight, Harding, Bradley, Ghiso, Aschner, Gomez Subs: Greco, Hawrysiuk, Devrimol, Dragas, Mandic
Sutherland: Blowes, Feehan, Stajic, O'Han, Short, Danaskos, A. Pfrengle, Karanasos, Mancia, Josevski, Petrovski Subs: M. Pfrengle, Oklamovski, Moffit, Olla
Referee: Greg Leverton
Assistant Referees: Peter Apostolou & Amelia Morris
4th Official: Ken Sharp



Great news for Premier League fans. Fernando Greco returned to the Bonnyrigg squad on the weekend after a long injury lay-off.



Parramatta Eagles 2 Penrith Panthers 1

By Greg Stock

A hat-trick by Daniel Macor helped secure the fifth consecutive victory for the Parramatta Eagles picked up a valuable three competition points in disposing of a plucky Penrith Panthers at Andrews Road Field on Saturday night.

Without the services of regular striker Anthony Mondello, out with an injured foot, the Eagles' forward line was more than up to the task, creating a number of second half chances to take the game.

After an entertaining first half, it was the Panthers who took a surprise lead two minutes after the break when Rod Hutchinson beat a host of Eagles' defenders to turn in a Tim O'Connell cross. But rather than go on with the job, the Panthers went back into their collective shells allowing the visitors some space and possession, which led to their undoing.

Jim Bakis scored the first Eagles' goal in the 60th minute when he gave Penrith goalkeeper Chad Taylor no chance, peeling inside the penalty box and unleashing a right-footed drive.

Twelve minutes later, midfielder Geoff Dwyer was Johnny on the spot when he met a Bakis cross from the left-hand side to calmly nod the ball into the top right hand corner.

It was a disappointing end to the match for the home side who bravely took the match up to their more fancied opponents in the first 50 minutes of the match.

Tim O'Connell and Rod Hutchinson gave the Eagles' defence a few headaches with their speed, while the cunning Osvaldo El Ali played his usual tricks in the centre of the park.

But overall, the Eagles did just enough to hold the home side and finish the match the stronger of the two sides.

Sweeper Mirko Jurilj was the standout performer for the winners, who look set to challenge for higher honours.



Parramatta Eagles' striker Jim Bakis scored his 7th goal of the season in Melita's 2-1 win against Penrith.

Penrith Panthers 1 (Hutchinson 48') - **Parramatta Eagles 2** (Bakis 60' Dwyer 72')

Penrith Panthers: Chad Taylor, Chris Giometti, Danny Wells, Paul Marosevic, Rod Hutchinson, Osvaldo El Ali (Martin McCaffery 67'), Luke O'Connell, Jason Sciberras, Tim O'Connell, Ryan Noble (David Gardiner 75'), Luke Boyd (Danny Hinton 83')

Parramatta Eagles: Jason Holmes, Geoff Dwyer (Mark Miligan 88') Malcolm Meilak, Mark Reveley, Mirko Jurilj, Daniel Kukucka (Daniel Borg 66'), Jim Bakis (Ben Delicata 85'), Glenn Sprod, Paul O'Grady, Geoff Howarth, Dania Cummins

Cautions: El Ali (pp) 21' Giometti (pp) 42' Meilak (pe) 43' Howarth (pe) 57' Dwyer (pe) 73'

Referee: Mark Hester

Assistant Referees: David Finlay and Damian Wanstall

Fourth Official: Robert Koller



Cant-M'ville Olympic 1 St George Saints 1

By Paul Goodwin

Canterbury-Marrickville can count themselves very fortunate to have left St George Stadium on Friday night with a point after a stoppage time penalty, harshly given in the opinion of many observers, allowed them to snatch a 1-1 draw against St George who had outplayed them for most of the game.

A weakened St George put on most of the first half pressure and continued to dominate in the second half against a lacklustre opponent.

The Saints took the lead in the 44th minute when Les Bihari failed to save for a third time after being able to thwart earlier efforts in a powerful St George raid.

Newcomer, former Sydney Olympic youth team striker and St George junior, Jade Permall, was able to tuck the ball away for the all important

goal which gave his side a 1-0 advantage at the break.

The Saints also had a second goal from Angelo Petratos disallowed, Petratos following up his initial shot in the 39th, that had been pushed away by Bihari, with a header, but this second effort was adjudged to be offside.

In the second period St George was desperately unlucky when Archie Markopoulos hit the crossbar with a rasping volley.

Canterbury, by contrast, did not threaten too often, perhaps their best chance coming from an Andy Amegashie cross from the left that substitute Nihad Alemeic scooped over the crossbar.

Then came the crucial equaliser for the Berries.

John Pillemer lifted the ball forward from just inside half way for the target man Amegashie to chase and with the Canterbury man jockeying to keep possession inside the St George box with his back to goal his attempted sharp turn and shot was thwarted by the defensive challenge of Archie

Markopoulos.

In the opinion of referee Wayne Crabb that challenge was unfair and the official pointed to the spot. Con Paradisis, reliable as ever, converted the stoppage time penalty and the Berries had salvaged their first point in six outings.

vaged their first point in six outings.

The lone point was more than Canterbury really deserved on the night and their opponents would have felt hard done by after a very spirited effort that should have allowed them to draw level with Sutherland at the bottom, instead of remaining two points adrift.

St George Saints 1 (J Permall 44m)
Canterbury Marrickville 1 (C Paradisis 91m Penalty)

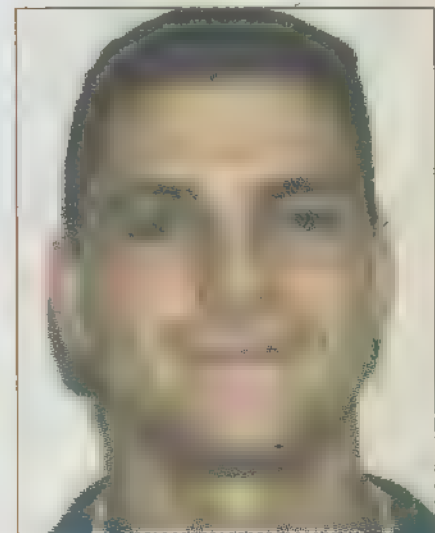
St George: Stacy Alogdeilis, Angelo Petratos, Max Sevaes, Spyros Kladis, George Maglis (Mark Banamis 70), Joshua Rufo (John Christou 63), Achilleas Markopoulos, Brad Campbell, Paulo Oliveira, Mladen Damjanovic, Jade Permall (Nabil Codmani 66)

Canterbury-Marrickville Olympic: Les Bihari, John Manolopoulos (Emmanuel Papageorgiou 75), Mark D'Alessandro, Michael Kladis, Andy Amegashie, Con Paradisis, Mark Beldham (Angelo Markopoulos 60), Hussein Jomaa (Nihad Alemeic 60), Aheleas Kotsopoulos, Anthony Uchino, John Pillemer

Cautions: Brad Campbell 28 (SG), Paulo Oliveira 42 (SG), Mladen Damjanovic 46 (SG), Mark Beldham 45 (CMO), Aheleas Kotsopoulos 45 (CMO), Michael Kladis 75 (CMO)

Referee: Wayne Crabb

Assistants: Andrew Kay and Heidi Breeze
Fourth Official: Wayne Spagnol



Olympic's Con Paradisis scored the equalizer with a 91st minute penalty.

NSW Premier League



Fairfield Bulls

2



Belconnen BD

2

By Nick Smith

The Belconnen Blue Devils came back from a two goal deficit to draw 2-2 with a tough Fairfield Bulls' side at Nineveh Field. Jason Connolly was the hero and the villain for the Bulls netting twice before conceding the tying goal with just five minutes left.

The first half saw the visitors dominate, peppering the Fairfield goal yet unable to penetrate owing to some fine defence and good keeping from Frank Mikuletic. Daniel Camara and Elliot Zwagobani each had shots tipped over whilst Michael Katz should have done better with his two opportunities, both of which were well held by the 'keeper. At the other end Matthew Borg and Marc Hoenselaars were not working together and the smothering defence of the Blue Devils picked them off easily.

A lashing at the break from Craig Sharpley helped inspire his troops and Fairfield went on the offensive. From a corner on the left after just ten minutes the ball fell sweetly to Connolly. His first time volley rocketed past everyone giving Tony Giannasca no chance.



Scorer of Belconnen's first goal was Daniel Camara.

Ten minutes on, Fairfield had a goal disallowed when referee Vic Gauci ruled that Giannasca had been kicked in the arm whilst holding the ball. Yet it was only another ten before they did get the second. A long shot from Andy Ravello was not cleared allowing Connolly to send a delicate chip over the scrimmage and into an empty net.

The second goal awoke the Blue Devils and within a minute they were back in the game. A long ball out from the defence was chested down by Camara and his shot from just outside the box stranded Mikuletic sliding inside the near post. With defenders being replaced by attackers, the Blue Devils went all out to get a result and when Giannasca sent a towering kick downfield.

Connolly totally mis-judged the ball, allowing it to bounce. Camara nipped in to head the ball towards an unmarked Steve Lazzari and with his first touch of the game he sent home a volley on the turn to tie up the proceedings.

Fairfield Bulls 2 (Jason Connolly 55, 75)
Belconnen Blue Devils 2 (Daniel Camara 76, Steve Lazzari 85)

FAIRFIELD BULLS Frank Mikuletic, Matthew Dihm, Paul Bourke, Paul Richardson (Pat Darvill 88), Ray Younis, Stewart Van Bentum (Adam Snyder 80), Marc Hoenselaars, Matthew Borg, Tom Maric, Andrew Ravello, Jason Connolly
BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS Anthony Giannasca, Toplica Popovich, Matthew Cachia (Steve Lazzari 82), Elliot Zwagobani, Shane Lyons, Michael Katz (Nic Purdue 73), Daniel Macor, Stewart Camara, Adnan Dowling, Stephen Kemp (David Arranz 67), Daniel Camara
Referee: Vic Gauci
Assistants: Michael Johnson and Les Spagnol
Fourth Official: Jim Barnes
Cautions: Stewart Van Bentum (FB) 41, Andrew Ravello (FB) 71, Ray Younis (FB) 92, Elliot Zwagobani (BDD) 92



Bankstown City

4



Blacktown City

3

By Paul Goodwin

The words 'seven goal thriller' are often bandied about, but at Jensen Park on Sunday night few present would dispute that description after a game the home side, Bankstown City Lions, won 4-3 against big guns Blacktown City Demons, hitting the lead for the first time in the 80th minute and running away with the game by the final whistle.

It all looked so different just 42 minutes into the match with Blacktown leading 2-0 from a 10th minute Naoki Imai strike and another from defender Steve Riches in the 39th. Imai had turned sharply in the box and found the net nicely after Jim Nikas had been thwarted by the 'keeper who could only push the ball away. Riches swooped when a cross from Paul Dee was not collected cleanly by the Bankstown 'keeper.

What looked like becoming an easy win for the visitors was turned on its head in the 42nd when Paul Weame was upended in the box by Damon Langan and Anthony Kanaan put away the penalty for the Lions.

Blacktown had begun the game full of fire and purpose and their passing game was superb, but after the break Bankstown showed similar commitment and were rewarded with an equaliser just three minutes after the restart.

George Issa and Anthony Kanaan combined on the right after giving Steve Riches the slip and from Kanaan's low cross Colin Luff was able to beat John Crawley with a stooping header.

It took Blacktown only another seven minutes to



Lions' hero, Goce Trposki.

regain the lead, however, with Kain Rastall bursting through the centre of the Lions' defence and slotting home with a low shot that had Zlatko Josevski apparently unsighted.

Bankstown did not lie down and inside a minute Luff had restored parity. Picking up a ball from deep, Luff on the left ventured into the box and beat the advancing Crawley at the near post with a delightful chip into the top right corner of the net. Robert Angievski was injected into the Lions' attack soon after this and made his presence felt with some great runs and passes, but he also found himself in scoring positions several times, two of them sitters, but could not finish.

Bankstown continued to take the game to Blacktown and gave their coach Ljube Jancev a wonderful first win since taking over recently, the prized scalp of Blacktown, when Goce Trposki got his head to a superbly flighted Alex Trpkoski free kick out on the left touchline. It was a cross of some precision and a finish worthy of such a key fixture.

So dominant was Bankstown in the closing stages that they also earned a penalty in the 88th when Angievski was brought down by Dee, but, surprisingly, Angievski was given the task of taking the spot kick himself against his old club and scuffed his shot tamely at Crawley.

Bankstown City Lions 4 (Anthony Kanaan 42m pen, Colin Luff 48m/56m, Goce Trposki 80m)
Blacktown City Demons 3 (Naoki Imai 10m, Steve Riches 39m, Kain Rastall 55m)

BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS: Zlatko Josevski, Sefer Yildiz, Richard Lukic, Anthony Kanaan (Robert Angievski 56), Paul Weame (Damian Lukic 77), George Issa, (Steven Dimitrievski 65), Goce Trposki, Alex Trpkoski, Freddy Umlil, Colin Luff, Dong-Ki Kim
BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS: John Crawley, Ben Willard, Damon Langan, Paul Dee, Kain Rastall, Naoki Imai, Jim Nikas, Zlatko Dordev (Mark Hagger 66), Steve Riches, David Reid, Patrick Gatt (Peter Semanni 78).
Cautions: Damon Langan 42 (BCD) Richard Lukic 83 (BCL) Paul Dee 88 (BCD)
Referee: Simon Przydacz
Assistants: Adrian Tamplin and Marc Nemorn
Fourth Official: Jim Nicolaou



Leichhardt Tigers

4



Central Coast

0

By Ray Sandell

Leichhardt continued their pre Xmas good form with a comfortable 4-0 win over a disappointing Central Coast team at Lambert Park on Sunday night. The first thirty minutes was a pretty even affair with both teams having chances to open the scoring.

As early as the fourth minute Peter Preston made a run down the right hand side and put a perfect cross to the waiting Damien Smith only to see his header scrape the top of the crossbar. Two minutes later Leichhardt gained a corner and a low shot from Steven Livingstone forced Matt Collits, in the Coasties' goal, to make a good save low down near the post.

Ten minutes later the Tigers made a break and Ross Kethel received the ball in the penalty area but his shot from six metres went sailing over the bar when he only had Collits to beat. Dane Hokin then sent an inch perfect clearance to Karl Freeman who flicked on to Smith and his low shot was well saved by Andrew Crews.

Leichhardt were starting to get on top and it was no

Leichhardt Tigers 4 (Steve Karavatakis 32m/90m, Sam La Rocca 46m, Derek Poimer 77m)
Central Coast Coasties 0

LEICHHARDT: Crews, Kethel, Livingstone, Galluzzo (Moric), Karavatakis, La Rocca, Brown, Falas (Lal) Jones, Tesoro, Poimer (Picken)
COASTIES: Collits, Matthews, Steele (Binskin), Hokin, Preston, Peatey, Smith, Williams (Daley), Freeman (Beckler), Ritchie, Clark.

Cautions: Hokin (CCC)
Referee: Nick Asargiotis.
Assistant Referees: Andrew Kay, Peter Verrender
Fourth Official: Ernie Horvath

surprise when Sam La Rocca sent over a great cross to Steve Karavatakis who coolly put the Tigers in front. Leichhardt had the Coasties confined to their own half for the remainder of the first half but could not add to the score. Apart from the Karavatakis goal the back three of Hokin, Andrew Clark and Sean Matthews had been playing well for the Coasties but the midfield had been disappointing.

During the break Coastie Coach Dale Eggleton made a number of changes, firstly substituting Marcus Steele with Aaron Binskin, dropped Peter Ritchie back to a sweeper position and moved Clark into midfield. All was to no avail as within one minute of the restart Leichhardt were two goals ahead with a simple tap in by La Rocca following a good cross by new signing Derek Poimer.

The Coasties seemed to lose shape and were finding the going very tough. Preston and Binskin, who were the wide runners, hardly saw the ball as they persisted in trying to go through the middle of the Tigers' defence, but even if the ball did get to the strikers, Smith and Freeman, they were quickly closed down by the resolute play of the defenders. Midway through the second half Leichhardt put the result out of doubt when Karavatakis split the Coasties defence open, slid a pass to Poimer who made it three nil with an easy tap in. Coasties were in disarray and Leichhardt looked rampant and with nearly the last kick of the game "Kara" scored his second to give the Tigers a convincing win.

For Leichhardt it meant they stayed in second position in the competition but for the Coasties the rest of

the season looks like being one of trying to improve on their low position and finding a goal-scorer. Despite signing two new strikers this season goals still elude them and as well as they play if they can't score goals they won't win matches.

One consolation for the Coasties was that the 2-1 win by their under 19 team put them in top position in that competition. At least the youngsters are showing the "big boys" how to do it!



Back in business — Steve Karavatakis of Leichhardt.



Juan Riquelme of Boca Juniors in action during the Copa Libertadores final match last year.

Riquelme rules South America

Uruguayan newspaper *El Pais* conducted a poll to reveal South America's best player of the year 2001: "King of the Americas".

As a result, Boca Juniors' midfielder Juan Roman Riquelme was named the best player of South America of 2001, overtaking Colombian national keeper Oscar Cordoba by 29 votes.

In 2000 Riquelme was also among the favorites for the title, but Romario, who this time was only the third, became the winner last year. Paraguayan international Francisco Arce took the fourth place, with Cruzeiro's Juan Pablo Sorin coming fifth. River Plate player Mario Yepes is the sixth.

Real Madrid French midfielder Zinedine Zidane was named "Soccer King of Europe." Riquelme will be symbolically crowned next month at a ceremony in the Uruguayan resort city of Punta del Este.

"Soccer King of the Americas" results.

1. Juan Roman Riquelme (Argentina) 88 votes.
2. Oscar Cordoba (Colombia) 59.
3. Romario de Souza (Brazil) 41.
4. Francisco Arce (Paraguay) 39.
5. Juan Pablo Sorin (Argentina) 37.

6. Mario Yepes (Colombia) 36.
7. Ariel Ortega (Argentina) 31.
8. Alejandro Lembo (Uruguay) 29.
9. Mauricio Serra (Colombia) 27.
10. Juninho Paulista (Argentina) 20.
- Andres D'Alencastro (Argentina) 20.

NAKATA EYES ENGLISH MOVE

Japanese star midfielder Hidetoshi Nakata, whose uninspiring months at Italy's crisis-hit club Parma have led to speculation about his transfer, says the English Premiership is on his mind.

"I don't know when but I want to go there at one time before I quit Soccer," the 24-year-old icon of Asian football told foreign journalists during a visit last week for the wedding of his business associate.

"London is all right," he smiled, when asked which team he likes to follow. But he insisted he was talking about a place where he likes to be.

Nakata, whose broad vision and probing passwork made him the Asian Player of the Year twice and Japan's best export in football, may be aware of reports Chelsea are seeking to sign him up to boost their midfield attack.

Another London club Arsenal alongside world renowned Manchester United appear to have an interest in him as an embargo on transfer deals is to be lifted on Wednesday.

He has yet to make an impact at Parma where his rocky ties with Japan's national coach Philippe Troussier and the media have made for a bumpy ride ahead of the World Cup finals to be co-hosted by Japan and South Korea in June.

He moved to Parma in a 26 million-dollar deal last July after helping AS Roma win Italy's championship with important performances in the title run-in.

But he admitted: "My team and myself are not doing so well right now."

When Parma, struggling near at the bottom of the Serie-A table, won their last match of the year at home on December 23 — 2-0 against Fiorentina — Nakata was kept on the bench all throughout for the third time this season.

The team had to call in former national coach Arrigo Sacchi as technical director to back Gedeone Carnignani who replaced Argentine Daniel Passarella as coach a week earlier.

Nakata, who launched his overseas career in 1998 with Serie-A Perugia after Japan made their winless World Cup finals debut in France, said his move from the Eternal City's 'dolce vita' had nothing to do with his play.

"Basically, I prefer to stay home which ever town I live in," said the former high school mathematics whiz kid who likes designer clothes and sports dyed hair.

"But, at times when I happen to feel like going out, I feel there is something missing about Parma. But, still, it is not far from Milan."

Giggs wants Fergie at Manchester Utd

Scoring two goals in the clash against Fulham and giving United title hopes Ryan Giggs last week asked Sir Alex Ferguson to stay at Old Trafford.

"The success we have had under him, no other manager has ever had. We have enjoyed so much success. The players who have played under him would love him to stay on and I would definitely

count myself as one of those," said Giggs.

Ferguson made no comments on that so far. Neither did United's board.

"We are used to winning. We have the experience of going into the last part of the season being right up there. We have won the championship before and that is important. You need that experience because teams will be taking points off each other and it's important how you react," said Giggs.

Manchester has only three points to catch up

with leaders Arsenal. Meanwhile, the defense line of the squad is Ferguson's number one problem.

"I'd have been disappointed if we'd thrown it all away. We could have finished them off. But there was carelessness on the ball and we gave it away at times. We have an uphill fight."

You can see how open the league is and we cannot afford to make any mistakes. All the rest believe they have a fantastic chance and that is why it is such a fantastic season," he told.



Alex Ferguson

HITZFELD IS EUROPE'S BEST COACH

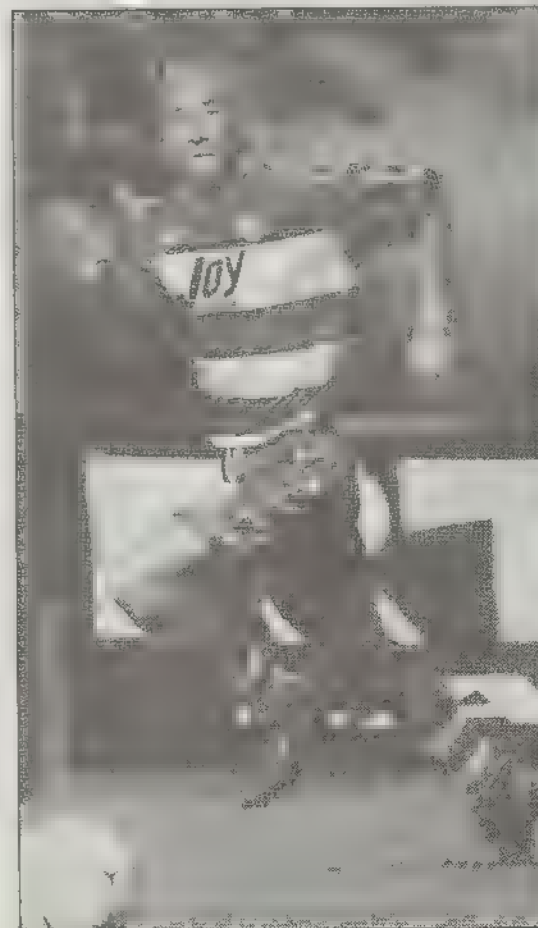
Journalists from 30 European countries last week elected Bayern Munich's Ottmar Hitzfeld as the continent's coach of the

year. The vote, carried out for the past 16 years on behalf of Uruguayan paper *El Pais*, saw Hitzfeld walk away with the top placing after Bayern's Intercontinental Cup, Champions League and German title wins.

He also took the award in 1997 for winning the Champions League with Borussia Dortmund. Hitzfeld collected 35 votes with Fabio Capello of AS Roma second on 26 and Liverpool's Gerard Houllier third on 14.

In a vote for the best European XI the journalists polled by *El Pais* voted for French star Zinedine Zidane as their top man with 41 votes — one ahead of Liverpool and England forward Michael Owen and Zidane's Real Madrid clubmate Raul third.

Last year's top-ranked star, Portugal and Real star Luis Figo, slipped to fourth.



Hidetoshi Nakata: Seeks transfer to England.



Van Basten turns coach

Speculation about Marco van Basten's return to football is continuing to grow in Holland.

The former Dutch international striker told *Radio Noord Holland* that he will begin a KNVB (Dutch FA) course in professional football coaching in September.

Van Basten played 58 matches for the Netherlands and well exceeded the minimum of fourty that is required to take the KNVB course.

This is the same path that long-serving internationals Ruud Gullit, Frank Rijkaard, Ronald Koeman and Johan Neeskens followed before taking up high-profile managerial positions.



Marco Van Basten

Van Basten did not comment on the criticism he had received from former Ajax manager Co Adriaanse. However he did say, "that's no use. His words didn't produce a positive effect for him".

Fear of Roma haunts Juventus

Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon has admitted that his side must step up a gear if they are to prevent Roma regaining the Scudetto.

"They are the real problem," he said. "I am afraid of Capello's team - Roma are physically and technically strong. They know how to win matches and they know how to win the title."

The Italy No 1 added that Serie A was more important to him than the Champions' League and the World Cup.

"I imagine that 2002 will be full of emotion with such great competitions. But I must put the Scudetto first. I am focused on that now," he said.

And Buffon is confident that Juve are in good shape. "We showed we don't need new players by demolishing Brescia 4-0 in our last game. I believe we can go on from here," he said, adding that the other big danger came from leaders Internazionale.

"They are also a good side, even without Christian Vieri and Ronaldo. And you can't forget that on the bench, they have players like Mohammed Kallon."

The goalkeeper is keen to consign the first half of the campaign to the past, especially the 3-1 Champions' League defeat to Arsenal. "I want to forget my mistakes, particularly the ones I made in London against Arsenal. That was the worst," he said.

"I made some great saves against Porto, Rosenborg and Bayer Leverkusen. I even made a good stop against Brescia, but nobody cared because we won 4-0."

Roma lie in second spot behind Inter, while Juventus occupy fourth position.



Players' strike looms in Senegal

Senegal's national soccer squad have threatened to boycott this month's African Nations Cup in a row over bonuses for their unprecedented World Cup qualification.

Players' spokesman Salif Diao told the West African country's television news last Sunday that the Football Federation had decided to award each player a 'derisory' 10 million CFA francs without the players' agreement.

"Today the federation agreed on a bonus without our agreement. We reckon that compared to what they will get, and the sponsorship, we are worth more than that," said Diao, a defender with top-flight French club Sedan.

"If this problem is not resolved, the public should not expect us to appear at the African Nations Cup."

Players have already received 10 million CFA francs each from Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade for snatching the country's

first ever spot at the World Cup finals, to be staged in Korea and Japan in 2002.

Diao said members of the squad, who are all based in Europe, had encountered problems getting leave from their foreign clubs to return for national duty.

"There are some players whose clubs are beginning to pay them

less because they have been selected (for the national side)," he said.

"The federation must live up to its responsibilities."

But Sports Minister Joseph Ndong insisted the bonus had been agreed on in advance and was not negotiable.

"The problem is simply agreeing on the 10 million which had indeed

been agreed on before qualification. Now they (the players) consider that is too little," Ndong told the same news programme.

"We must avoid getting into raising bids."

Ndong said he would talk to the players to settle the issue before the continental tournament starts in neighbouring Mali on January 19.



Two Afghan teams, Sabawoon and Miwand, pose for a group photo prior to a football finals match in Kabul on 25 December 2001. It was the first football match after the ousting of the Taliban regime in Kabul in a tournament, called the Hindukush Cup, held in celebration of the Northern Alliance's triumph over the Taliban.

Erratic Chelsea frustrates coach

Chelsea's Italian coach, Claudio Ranieri admitted last week he is being driven crazy by his erratic Chelsea stars.

The Blues chucked away a lead last week and crashed 4-2 against Southampton to their heaviest home defeat since March.

And that left Ranieri sighing: "Crazy football, crazy Chelsea. It is so frustrating."

"Frustrating not only for the players - but for me, the chairman and the fans. Everyone wants to win but there is no reason to this. The players make it difficult. They went 1-0 down, then equalised, then we were winning - and then we lost."

James Beattie was the hero for Southampton.

He waded in with a goal double, while Marian Pahars and Chris Marsden also hit the target to boost Southampton's chances of beating the drop and raise a question mark over Chelsea's Champions League ambitions.

Ranieri added: "After our win against Newcastle at the weekend, everybody wanted to win."

"In the first half, we were running faster than the ball because everybody wanted to do something for the squad."

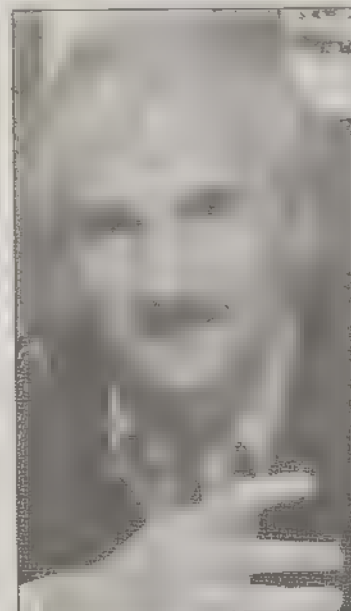
"Then, in the second half, Southampton played very well and I

wondered why we were only playing with the long ball.

"But my philosophy won't change. I believe in work, work, work and training is important."

Prolific strikers Eidur Gudjohnsen and Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink hit the target for the stuttering Blues.

But Saints boss Gordon Strachan hailed his own hitman - Beattie - for inspiring the St Mary's side to only their second away win since the Scot took charge in October.

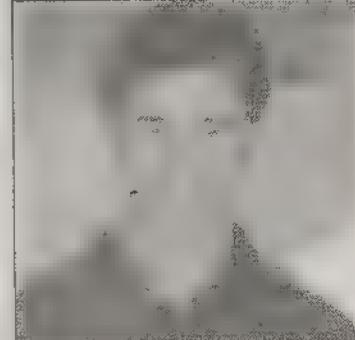


Rudi Voller: May quit as Germany's coach.

Strachan said: "Beattie was phenomenal. He's been like that recently. He's a raw young boy who, after today's performance, will get a bit of attention."

"It's how he can handle it that matters. He has a lot of faults but a big heart and wants to get better."

"I always thought we could get something out of the game but I'm surprised to have come here and scored four."



Claudio Ranieri: Frustrated.

VOLLER THREATENS TO DUMP GERMANY

Germany coach Rudi Voller will quit ahead of the 2006 World Cup if he feels he is no longer the right man for the job, he told German daily *Bild*.

The claim comes less than a month after Voller received a resounding vote of confidence and signed a contract extension until 2006.

"Should I encounter any problems I will not be hanging on to my job come what may," said the 41-year-old who came under fire during his side's patchy qualification campaign for the 2002 tournament.

"If we feel things are not working right, I'll accept the consequences," he conceded.

"But I always look on the bright side and I think we'll have a good World Cup," Voller predicted of the upcoming 2002 finals in South Korea and Japan.

Should that be the case, Voller will certainly be saddled with the task of masterminding home hopes at the 2006 event, which is hosted by Germany.



RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

The dreaded penalty shootout has always haunted Italy in World Cups...well, at least in recent World Cups. In this soccer-crazy country, the good citizens and the millions of other Azzurri supporters around the world, have suffered because of this most heartbreaking way of ending games.

Individuals deciding the fate of a team sport. It just doesn't make sense. In 1990 Azeglio Vieri, coached Italy and they reached the semi-final stage of the World Cup without conceding a goal.

It was in the semi-final against Argentina who were led by Diego Maradona, that Azzurri supporters first got a taste of what it was like to lose this way.

Italy played their prior matches in Rome but this one was played at the San Paolo Stadium in Naples. Maradona's second home and after things were tied at 1-1 after extra time Italy faced their first World Cup penalty shootout. Misses by Roberto Donadoni and then Aldo Serena saw Italy eliminated having only conceded one goal and never losing a game. Small consolation indeed.

In 1994, it was the famous final in Pasadena California that ended 0-0 between Italy and Brazil. Luis Figo, Ronaldo, Baresi and in injury Roberto Baggio missed on Italy and Arrigo Sacchi's men had to settle for the Spanish trophy prize in the cruellest of ways.

In 1998 it was a very third time lucky. The quarter-final game against eventual champions and hosts France ended with an extra time shootout after things were tied 1-1.

Luigi Di Biagio hit the crossbar and Cesare Maldini's team was given the Azzurri supporters cursed the penalty shootout once again but it didn't help.

Not in 2002 another World Cup is upon us and the question remains: will Italy once again have to face the shootout? You can't even truly practice for a penalty shootout because to take one in training is one thing, but to take one in the heat of the moment with the pressure on your shoulders, is a completely different matter.

Azzurri supporters will be hoping that Italy don't face another shootout and in the meantime, one can only hope that a fairer method of deciding games can be found.

◆◆◆◆◆

Coaches in the Serie A come and go fairly fast. So far the 'honour roll' of sackings starts the season started with a fairly extensive list.

Lazio replaced Dino Zoff with Alberto Zaccheroni. At Milan swapped Fatih Terim for Carlo Ancelotti. Parma have replaced Renzo Ulivieri with Daniel Passarella, and then Passarella, after five consecutive losses, with Clemente (Sacchi is also technical director). Udinese have sacked Roy Hodgson for Gaetano Quattrone and Venezia sacked Cesare Prandini for Alfredo Magni.

So who would want to be a coach? When something goes wrong they receive all the blame and rarely do they get the credit for good performances.

◆◆◆◆◆

After 17 rounds of Italian football, this year, not exactly the half-way point of the season, it is an appropriate time to reflect on the stars of the Serie A to date.

Atalanta's midfielder Cristian Donadoni has really worked wonders. He scores on a regular basis and has already made his debut for Italy this year and scored a goal for the national team. He will be part of Italy's World Cup squad without any doubt.

Hernan Crespo is the maestro of Lazio. After a slow and injury-riddled start to the season he has really got himself into top gear now. He scores regularly and should lead the Argentinian strike force come World Cup time with Gabriel Batistuta.

Roma's captain Francesco Totti has been playing well for a couple of seasons and the Italian playmaker is also one to watch for in Japan and Korea.

Strikers David Trezeguet of Juventus, Christian Vieri of Inter and Andrey Shevchenko are all in superb form. Unfortunately, only the first two will be present at the World Cup because Ukraine failed to qualify.

However, Piacenza's striker, Dario Hubner, is as good as it gets. Little known Hubner used to score regularly at Brescia and this year has kept the tally going at Piacenza.

It is harder to score for the lesser teams because the service is never as good and therefore the tremendous scoring opportunities are not really there.

And, finally, there is the veteran Robbie Baggie. Injury has halted his excellent start to the season and he looks likely to miss out on a World Cup spot. Unfortunately it isn't because of injury as internal politics and jealousies in Italian soccer will prevent him from going.



Demetrio Albertini (right) of AC Milan and Max Tonetto of Lecce fight for the ball during a match in Lecce. AC Milan won 1-0.

ATALANTA 1
CHIEVO VERONA 2
Chievo Verona fell behind to a fifth-minute goal from Atalanta midfielder Daniele Berretta after a superb set-up from playmaker Cristiano Doni.

But Luigi Del Neri's side drew level when Massimo Marazzina knocked home the rebound after Simone Barone's shot had rattled out off the post. Federico Cossato then grabbed the winner with a clinical finish after good work from Congolese winger Jason Mayele.

BOLOGNA 2
BRESCIA 1
Bologna recorded their eighth win of the season while sending Brescia to their seventh league defeat.

The home side took the lead after 11 minutes when Brescia defender Fabio Petrucci headed the ball into his own net while trying to clear a Carlo Nervo shot that had smashed off the crossbar.

Nervo needed no extra help in the 30th minute as he struck home a vol-

ley from inside the box for a 2-0 lead before Brescia forward Luca Toni pulled one back for the visitors three minutes from the break.

FIorentina 1
PERUGIA 3
Fiorentina slipped further into trouble with a 3-1 defeat at home to Perugia, who had Giovanni Tedesco sent off in the 68th minute but still held on for their third straight win.

Fiorentina took the lead through a Daniele Adams header after eight minutes. Greek striker Zisis Vryzas levelled the score before a Marco Di Loreto header gave the visitors the lead in the 59th minute. Fabio Grosso completed the scoring with a 76th-minute free kick.

JUVENTUS 3
UDINESE 0
Juventus took the lead through Gianluca Zambrotta after 15 minutes before Czech midfielder Pavel Nedved made it 2-0 with a superb strike from 25 metres after cutting in from the right flank.

Four minutes before the break, Dutch international midfielder Edgar Davids made it three with a neat finish after being put free by Alessandro Del Piero.

Juventus survived an early scare when Udinese were awarded a fifth-minute penalty. But Roberto Muzzi, linked with a move to the Turin club, saw his weak shot saved by Juve keeper Gianluigi Buffon.

LECCE 0
AC MILAN 1
A 78th-minute header from Spaniard Jose Mari was enough to give AC Milan their eighth victory of the season on Saturday.

Milan, without the injured Paolo Maldini, Rui Costa and Filippo Inzaghi, dominated possession in the first half but were unable to prise open the Lecce defence.

Lecce had a great chance to equalise in injury time when Max Tonetto broke through the centre of the Milan defence but could only fire his shot straight at Milan goalkeeper Christian Abbiati. Milan substitute

Marco Simone struck the post in the final seconds.

AS ROMA 1
TORINO 0
Captain Francesco Totti grabbed the only goal of the game in the 24th minute with a fine solo effort, rounding Torino goalkeeper Luca Bucci before slotting home.

Torino put Fabio Capello's side under plenty of pressure after the break and Roma had keeper Ivan Pelizzoli to thank for a fine save which foiled Fabio Galante in injury time.

It was Roma's 10th win of the season while Torino recorded their eighth loss in 17 games.

VENEZIA 3
PARMA 4
Marco Di Vaio scored a hat-trick for 10-man Parma in a thrilling 4-3 win at fellow strugglers Venezia.

Parma led 3-2 at the break but then had their captain, Italy defender Fabio Cannavaro, sent off in the 50th minute.

Bottom-club Venezia pulled level a minute from the end through Filippo Maniero's second goal but Di Vaio secured the win and his hat-trick in the final minute.

VERONA 1
PIACENZA 0
A 74th-minute strike by defender Marco Zanchi gave Verona a hard-earned victory over Piacenza. Verona attacked for most of the match and even had a Michele Cossato goal disallowed in the 16th minute, before finally securing their seventh victory of the season.

This Week (Sunday, January 13)

Atalanta vs Bologna
Chievo vs Fiorentina
AC Milan vs Brescia
Parma vs Lecce
Perugia vs Inter Milan
Piacenza vs Lazio
AS Roma vs Verona
Torino vs Udinese
Venezia vs Juventus

Atalanta 1 Chievo Verona 2, Bologna 2
Brescia 1, Fiorentina 1 Perugia 3, Inter
Milan 0 Lazio 0, Juventus 3 Udinese 0, AS
Roma 1 Torino 0, Venezia 3 Parma 4,
Verona 1 Piacenza 0, Lecce 0 AC Milan 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AS Roma	17	10	6	1	25	9	36
Inter Milan	17	10	5	2	31	16	35
Chievo Verona	16	10	2	4	30	20	32
Juventus	17	8	7	2	30	13	31
AC Milan	17	8	6	3	26	18	30
Bologna	17	8	5	4	15	16	27
Lazio	16	6	7	3	21	12	25
Venezia	17	7	4	6	23	24	25
Perugia	17	6	4	7	20	21	22
Udinese	17	6	3	8	24	28	21
Atalanta	17	6	3	8	22	29	21
Piacenza	17	5	3	9	23	25	18
Brescia	17	4	6	7	20	30	18
Torino	17	4	5	8	18	23	17
Parma	17	4	5	8	21	27	17
Lecce	17	4	5	8	18	25	17
Fiorentina	17	4	2	11	18	35	14
Venezia	17	2	4	11	15	29	10



Christian Vieri (right) of Inter Milan vies with Giuliano Giannichedda of Lazio in their game in Milan.



ENGLAND

Villa gets Ruud FA Cup shock

Ruud van Nistelrooy ruined Peter Schmeichel's big day with another stunning demonstration of his goalscoring prowess as Manchester United mounted a stunning comeback at Villa Park.

United were 2-0 down and seemingly heading out of the FA Cup when the Dutch master answered United's alarm call from the substitute's bench.

In a stunning five-minute spell, Villa's 2-0 lead had been turned on its head. First Ole-Gunnar Solskjaer pulled one back for United on.

And then Van Nistelrooy capped his first FA Cup tie with two goals in two minutes to break the heart of the former Manchester United goalkeeper.

But they clearly missed the pace of Ryan Giggs and the penalty-box wiles of Van Nistelrooy, who was rested on the bench with a groin injury.

Even so, they carved out the best of the few first-half chances.

David Beckham, making only his second start in nine games, beat Villa's offside trap in the 24th minute but found Schmeichel a big barrier.

And when Solskjaer had a sight of goal, his shot turned into catching practice for the former United keeper.

Schmeichel should have been



John Arne Riise (right) of Liverpool is fouled by Andrew Johnson of Birmingham City in the FA Cup Third Round match at Anfield.

given no chance by Chadwick, though, a minute into the second-half, but from 18 yards he fired over.

United were made to pay for that miss on 50 minutes when Lee Hendrie threaded a pass through the heart of the United defence.

Phil Neville was outmanoeuvred by Ian Taylor who held the

United defender off to tuck his shot past Carroll.

Villa doubled their lead a minute later, when another surge from Taylor caused confusion in the United defence as Merson lofted the ball forward.

Neville had half an eye on Taylor and there was no communication with Carroll as he nodded

the ball past his keeper.

That was the signal for United to throw Van Nistelrooy into the fray but Villa almost scored a third when Angel was inches away from making contact with Vassell's cross.

United had struggled to break down Villa's resolute defence but on 76 minutes Solskjaer threw

United a lifeline to set up a pulsating finish.

The Norwegian outwitted Olof Mellberg and slotted his shot between Schmeichel's legs at the near post.

But it was Van Nistelrooy who stole the show as he repaid another instalment of his \$38m transfer fee.

On 79 minutes the Dutchman latched on to Beckham's nod-

down, cushioning the ball perfectly on his chest before lashing the ball past Schmeichel.

Two minutes later he stunned Villa by firing United into the lead.

Solskjaer turned into the provider as he fed the ball through for Van Nistelrooy to commit Schmeichel before rounding him and guiding the ball into an empty net.

ALL THE THIRD ROUND RESULTS

Barnsley	.....1	Blackburn	.....1
Burnley	.....4	Canvey Island	.....1
Charlton	.....2	Blackpool	.....1
Dagenham	.....1	Ipswich	.....4
Grimsby	.....0	York	.....0
Leicester	.....2	Mansfield	.....1
Liverpool	.....3	Birmingham	.....0
Man City	.....2	Swindon	.....0
Millwall	.....2	Scunthorpe	.....1
Newcastle	.....2	Crystal Palace	.....0
Norwich	.....0	Chelsea	.....0
Portsmouth	.....1	Orient	.....4
Sheffield Utd	.....1	Nott'ham Forest	.....0
Stoke	.....0	Everton	.....1
Sunderland	.....1	West Brom	.....2
Wolves	.....0	Gillingham	.....1
Watford	.....2	Arsenal	.....4
Aston Villa	.....2	Manchester Utd	.....3
Cardiff	.....2	Leeds	.....1
Chelt'ham	.....2	Oldham	.....1
Derby	.....1	Bristol Rovers	.....3
Mac'field	.....0	West Ham	.....3

ARSENAL, LIVERPOOL MEET AGAIN

The highlight of the FA Cup fourth round draw on Sunday night saw Arsenal drawn at home to Liverpool.

The two Premiership heavyweights, who contested last season's final, were the last two teams in the hat.

Liverpool won the final at the Millennium Stadium 2-1 in May last year, with two late goals by Michael Owen.

Arsenal gained revenge of type with a 2-1 win in the recent Premiership match at Anfield after being reduced to 10 men.

Before their FA Cup meeting in the last week of January, the teams are scheduled to meet again in the league.

Another potential all-Premiership encounter could see Steve McClaren's Middlesbrough entertain Manchester United.

Middlesbrough have yet to play their third round tie against Wimbledon.

But if they progress, McClaren will again renew acquaintances with his former boss at Old Trafford, Sir Alex Ferguson.

"I hope he gets through,"

Ferguson said of his former assistant manager after the draw was made.

Ferguson's United came back from two goals down to beat Aston Villa on a dramatic day of action which also saw Cardiff and Bristol Rovers topple Premiership teams.

However, neither side have been handed a lucrative reward.

Cardiff, who beat Leeds United 2-1, will travel to either Southend or Tranmere.

Rovers have again been drawn away, and after beating Derby at Pride Park, they face Gillingham.

THIS WEEK'S PREMIERSHIP TIES

(Saturday, January 12)

Arsenal	vs	Liverpool
West Ham	vs	Leicester
Aston Villa	vs	Derby County
Blackburn Rovers	vs	Charlton Ath.
Bolton Wanderers	vs	Chelsea
Everton	vs	Sunderland
Fulham	vs	Middlesbrough
Ipswich Town	vs	Tottenham
Newcastle	vs	Leeds Utd
Southampton	vs	Manchester Utd

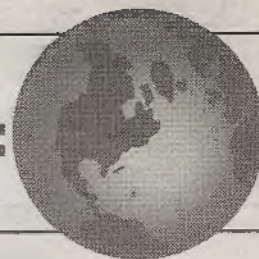
FOURTH ROUND FIXTURES

Brighton/Preston v Sheffield United
Rotherham/Southampton v Crewe/Sheff. Wednesday
Charlton Athletic v Walsall/Bradford
Southend United or Tranmere v Cardiff
Gillingham v Bristol Rovers
Grimsby/York v Wycombe/Fulham
Darlington/Peterborough v Newcastle
Coventry/Tottenham v Stockport/Bolton
Norwich/Chelsea v West Ham United
Millwall v Barnsley/Blackburn
Cheltenham v Burnley
Everton v Leyton Orient
West Bromwich Albion v Leicester City
Wimbledon/Middlesbrough v Man United
Ipswich Town v Man City
Arsenal v Liverpool

All matches to be played on the weekend of 26 - 27 January.



Olivier Bernard of Newcastle battles with Aki Riihilahti of Crystal Palace during the FA Cup Third round game at St James Park.



Spanish Primera Liga

Real Madrid take control

ALAVES 0 OSASUNA 2

Osasuna moved out of the relegation zone with this excellent win. Cesar Palacios headed the first on 51 minutes and Alaves keeper Martin Herrera had to look lively to save good efforts from Fernando and Alfredo shortly after.

It seemed just a matter of time before the second goal, though, and it duly arrived on 70 minutes, Francisco Jusue nodding in from a corner.

BILBAO 1 TENERIFE 2

A tight game suddenly opened up on 72 minutes as Bichi Fuertes beat the Bilbao keeper with a shot from outside the box.

Bruno Marioni slotted in the second, unchallenged, two minutes later after a mistake from the home defence. Although Julen Guerrero pulled one back five minutes later, Tenerife held on for a surprise win.

BARCELONA 2 ZARAGOZA 0

The Christmas break looked to have done Barcelona good as they attacked with relish throughout an entertaining game.

The first goal came in injury-time just before the break, Sergi racing down the left and crossing for Patrick Kluivert to score with his first touch at the near post.

Kluivert was the provider for the second, pulling back to provide a simple finish for Javier Saviola 10 minutes after the interval.



Real Sociedad's Russian striker Khokhlov (left) and Las Palmas' defender Angel tackle for the ball during their match.

Barca might have added more as Rivaldo hit the post and bar.

MALAGA 2 ESPANYOL 0

Sergio Duda gave Malaga the lead with a smart free-kick on 35 minutes and Dario Silva completed the win with a penalty six minutes from time.

REAL BETIS 1 VALENCIA 3

Goals from Salva Ballesta and Adrian Ilie gave Valencia an early 2-0 lead and they must have thought they had the three points secured when Betis had Luis Fernandez sent off on 42 minutes.

But Capi pulled one back just before halftime, and the game was back in the balance when Salva was sent off after 58 minutes for a blatant handball, his second bookable offence.

With both teams down to 10 men, Betis missed several clear chances to equalise before a Ruben Baraja penalty 11 minutes from time clinched the win for the visitors.

VALLADOLID 2 REAL MALLORCA 1

A tricky run from Tote in the fifth minute set up Fernando for Valladolid's first while Luis Garcia's long shot just before the hour doubled the lead for the home side.

Alberto Luque pulled one back on 65 minutes, side-footing home after the ball broke to him in the area. Despite dominating possession for the remainder of the game, the visitors were unable to force an equaliser.

CELTA VIGO 2 VALLECANO 2

Celta recovered from Jon Perez Bolo's first-half opener to take the lead with a Catanha header and a long-range strike from Edu.

The Spanish league's basement side came back impressively though, earning a deserved point as Bosnian international Elvir Bolic found space in the area to head home a cross from the right with just seconds remaining.

LAS PALMAS 0 SOCIEDAD 0

Real Sociedad failed to reproduce the free-flowing football that earned them a 6-0 win over Valladolid in their last outing.

Las Palmas were their usual solid selves at home and the game petered out into a goalless draw.

REAL MADRID 3 LA CORUNA 1

Real claimed top spot at the halfway point in the season thanks to virtuosic goals from Zinedine Zidane and Raul.

A furious opening spell brought

three goals in four minutes. Fernando Morientes put Real ahead with a neat finish in the fifth minute, Roy Makaay then levelled from the spot before Zidane cracked home from the edge of the box to make it 2-1.

Raul made the game safe for Real on 63 minutes, receiving the ball with his back to goal, turning past two defenders and beating the Depor keeper with a fierce drive.

VILLARREAL 0 SEVILLA 2

Sevilla took the lead via Francisco Casquero on 24 minutes and the sending-off of Guillermo Amor 14 minutes later left the home side in real trouble.

Sevilla controlled the rest of the game, with Moises doubling their lead two minutes from time. But the striker's return to his former club came to an unhappy end as he received his second yellow card in injury time.



Real Madrid's Raul Gonzalez (left) is challenged by Deportivo's Nouredine Naybet during their match at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid.

First Division Results

Alaves 0 Osasuna 2, Athletic Bilbao 1 Tenerife 2, Barcelona 2 Real Zaragoza 0, Malaga 2 Espanyol 0, Real Betis 1 Valencia 3, Valladolid 2 Real Mallorca 1, Celta Vigo 2 Rayo Vallecano 2, Las Palmas 0 Real Sociedad 0, Real Madrid 3 Deportivo Coruna 1, Villarreal 0 Sevilla 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Madrid	19	10	5	4	36	22	35
Deportivo Coruna	19	10	3	6	33	25	33
Valencia	19	8	9	2	23	16	33
Celta Vigo	19	8	8	3	36	22	32
Athletic Bilbao	19	8	7	4	27	25	31
Real Betis	19	9	4	6	20	18	31
Barcelona	19	8	6	5	27	17	30
Alaves	18	9	3	6	19	12	30
Sevilla	19	7	6	6	29	22	27
Valladolid	19	7	4	8	20	33	25
Las Palmas	19	6	6	7	20	16	24
Malaga	19	6	6	7	22	24	24
Espanyol	19	7	3	9	24	31	24
Real Zaragoza	19	7	2	10	18	27	23
Villarreal	19	6	4	9	19	22	22
Osasuna	19	6	4	9	17	24	22
Tenerife	19	6	3	10	14	23	21
Real Mallorca	19	5	5	9	19	26	20
Real Sociedad	19	5	4	10	23	27	19
Rayo Vallecano	18	3	4	11	18	32	13

Second Division Results

Burgos 0 Atletico Madrid 4, Eibar 3 Elche 1, Extremadura 1 Gim. Tarragona 0, Jaen 0 Murcia 0, Leganes 1 Albacete 2, Levante 0 Numancia 1, Racing Ferrol 1 Cordoba 3, Rec. Huelva 0 Sporting Gijon 0, Salamanca 2 Badajoz 2, R. Santander 2 Ejido 1, Real Oviedo 1 Xerez 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atletico Madrid	21	14	4	3	36	14	46
Xerez	21	12	3	6	25	17	39
Racing Santander	21	9	7	5	25	19	34
Albacete	21	9	6	6	22	14	33
Real Oviedo	21	8	9	4	20	12	33
Recreativo Huelva	21	8	9	4	20	16	33
Burgos	21	9	5	7	21	20	32
Eibar	21	8	7	6	24	13	31
Badajoz	21	8	5	8	20	21	29
Salamanca	21	6	10	5	30	29	28
Numancia	21	7	7	7	22	27	28
Racing Ferrol	21	8	3	10	28	29	27
Sporting Gijon	21	6	8	7	27	27	26
Cordoba	21	7	5	9	24	26	26
Jaen	21	7	5	9	20	27	26
Elche	21	6	8	7	17	24	26
Extremadura	21	6	7	8	16	19	25
Murcia	21	5	8	8	18	23	23
Leganes	21	5	8	8	13	20	23
Levante	21	4	8	9	20	31	20
Gim. Tarragona	21	4	6	11	18	25	18
Ejido	21	2	8	11	17	30	14

THIS WEEKEND

(Sunday, January 13)

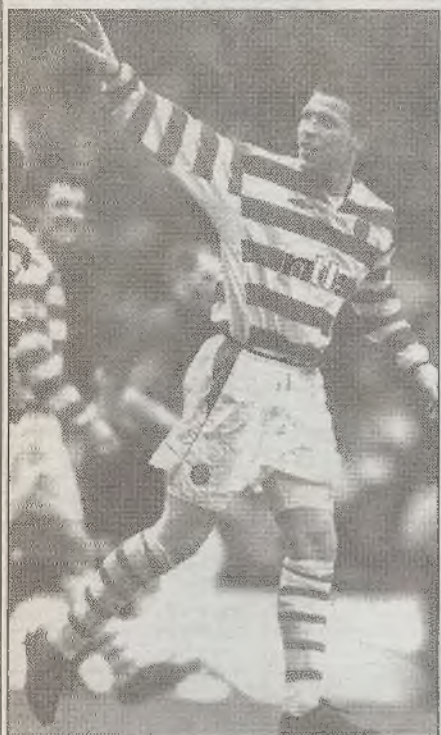
Betis vs Malaga
Real Madrid vs Valencia
Valladolid vs Deportivo Coruna
Las Palmas vs Mallorca
Athletic Bilbao vs Real Sociedad
Alaves vs Tenerife
Celta Vigo vs Osasuna
Villarreal vs Rayo Vallecano
Barcelona vs Sevilla
Zaragoza vs Espanyol



Brazilian Denilson de Oliveira (left) of Betis Seville struggles for the ball with Valencia's Curro Torres.



SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE



Alan Thompson: Celtic's hardworking striker.

BAD WEATHER ALL ROUND

Stephen Crawford scored twice and Scott Thompson also contributed with a goal as Dunfermline beat Motherwell 3-1 with Stuart Elliott finding the net for the visitors. Dunfermline's win was the only all-SPL tie.

Dundee United, meanwhile, comfortably beat Forres Mechanics 3-0 after a second half brace from Hasney Aljofree before Charlie Miller added a late third. Heart of Midlothian were made to work for their 2-1 win over Ross County. Ricardo Fuller scored twice in the second half but the home side were made to sweat as Perry pulled back a late goal.

Kilmarnock also progressed to the fourth round with a convincing 3-0 win over Airdrie courtesy of goals from Ally Mitchell, Jesus Sanjuan, Peter Cannero. Stranraer, meanwhile, can look forward to a trip to Edinburgh for a replay against Hibs after forcing a 0-0 draw against the Premier League side on Saturday while Ayr United crushed Deveronvale 6-0.

In the Fourth round, Celtic will face Kilmarnock in the fourth round of the Scottish FA Cup if they overcome Alloa in the third round while Rangers will face the winners of the Stranraer v Hibernian clash if they beat Berwick in their postponed tie.

Kilmarnock beat Airdrie 3-0 in the third round in one of few games which could be played due to the freezing conditions in Scotland. And the Rugby Park club have now been drawn with the winners of the Celtic and Alloa, who had their clash postponed.

Celtic's Old Firm rivals Rangers will play the winners of Stranraer and Hibernian, who played out a goalless draw on Saturday, if they beat Berwick in the third round. Dunfermline must travel to Ayr, who dumped Highland League side Deveronvale out of the competition with a 6-0 thrashing.

Dundee 1 Falkirk (I) 1, Deveronvale (ML) 0
Ayr (I) 6, Dundee United 3 Forres Mechanics (ML) 0, Dunfermline Athletic 3 Motherwell 1, Hearts 2 Ross County (I) 1, Kilmarnock 3 Airdrieonians (I) 0, Stranraer (II) 0
Hibernian 0 (Postponed - all to be played Tuesday, January 8 unless stated): Albion (III) v Livingston Alloa (II) v Celtic Arbroath (I) v Inverness C.Thistle (I) Berwick (II) v Rangers (To be played on Tuesday, January 15) Clyde (I) v St Mirren (I) East Fife (III) v Partick (I) Gala Fairydean (ML) v Forfar (II), Hamilton (II) v Raith (I), St Johnstone v Aberdeen.

FRENCH CHAMPIONNAT

PSG LOSE AT HOME

A late winner from Argentinian playmaker Marcelo Gallardo gave Monaco all three points as they beat Paris Saint-Germain 2-1 at the Parc des Princes. A Ronaldinho penalty three minutes before half-time gave PSG the lead, but Souleymane Camara levelled 18 minutes into the second half, and it was Didier Deschamps side who had the last laugh.

Shabani Nonda broke clear down the wing, and his deep cross was superbly controlled by Gallardo, who then fired the ball calmly past Lionel Letizi. Lyon overcame an early setback to beat Guingamp 4-2 at the Stade du Roudourou, largely thanks to a hat-trick from Christoph Delmotte. Cedric Bardon put the home side ahead on five minutes, firing home the rebound after Fabrice Florese's effort had been cleared off the line. Blaise Kouassi, though, was dismissed for a professional foul three minutes before half-time, and Lyon found things much easier in the second half. Delmotte grabbed two in two minutes, and Sonny Anderson made it 3-1 on 55 minutes as he latched onto a fine ball from the inspi-



Montpellier's Nenad Dzodic (left) fights for the ball with Lille's Daqui Bakari.

rationnal Eric Carriere. Florese pulled one back two minutes later from Stephane Carnot's cross, but to no avail, as Delmotte completed his hat-trick four minutes from time. Bordeaux climbed to within a point of PSG as they beat Rennes 2-1. Olivier Sorlin crashed home the opener for Rennes after 25 minutes, only for Christophe Sanchez to level from Vikash Dhorasoo's cross 12 minutes later. Pedro Pauleta claimed the winner on 70 minutes. Bruno Carotti broke the deadlock for Montpellier against Lille with a deflected shot on 27 minutes, and a Jonny Ecker own goal on 63 minutes made it 2-0.

Charles Devineu and Hassan Ahmada were both on target as Nantes climbed out of the relegation zone with a 2-0 victory at Bastia. Mickael Isabey struck on 58 minutes to cancel out Anthony Gavvin's 50th minute strike and earn Sochaux a point at Lorient.

Paris St Germain 1 Monaco 2, Guingamp 2 Olympique Lyon 4, Montpellier 2 Lille 0, Bordeaux 2 Stade Rennes 1, Lorient 1 Sochaux 1, Bastia 0 Nantes 2, (Postponed due to frozen pitches) RC Lens v Metz; Sedan v AJ Auxerre; Troyes v Olympique Marseille.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
RC Lens	19	12	5	2	35	14	41
Lyon	19	11	3	5	37	20	36
AJ Auxerre	18	9	6	3	26	18	33
Lille	19	9	6	4	25	19	33
PSG	20	7	10	3	23	15	31
Bordeaux	19	8	7	4	17	11	31
Sochaux	20	7	7	6	28	25	28
Montpellier	18	6	7	5	19	15	25
Troyes	18	7	4	7	21	21	25
Marseille	19	5	8	6	17	17	23
Monaco	19	6	5	8	21	22	23
Sedan	19	5	7	7	22	22	22
Bastia	19	7	1	11	20	29	22
Rennes	20	5	5	10	19	31	20
Guingamp	20	5	5	10	18	35	20
Nantes	20	5	4	11	15	28	19
Metz	17	5	2	10	9	18	17
Lorient	19	4	4	11	29	41	16

PORTUGUESE

SPORTING STAY TOP

Sporting's 2-1 win over Beira Mar kept them on top of the Portuguese premier league after the weekend's matches, the first time they have led the standings at the halfway stage in 20 years.

Two set-piece goals by Brazilian defender Andre Cruz, one in each half, earned Sporting their victory as they moved four points clear of second-placed Porto and reigning champions Boavista. Porto ended a run of three games without a win by beating Pacos Ferreira 1-0 at home, while Boavista took on Vitoria Setubal on Monday.

Sporting lead the standings with 36 points after 11 wins in 17 matches, while Porto and Boavista, who have a game in hand, are both on 32. Fourth-placed Uniao Leiria, the surprise package of the season so far, beat Vitoria Guimaraes 2-1 at home on Saturday to lie six points behind the league leaders and one ahead of former European champions Benfica. Cruz opened the scoring on the half-hour for Sporting on Saturday with his first goal in a year, curling a free-kick from 25 metres into the top left corner. Brazilian midfielder Juninho Petrolina equalised for Beira Mar in the 59th minute, following a goalmouth scramble when Sporting's Tiago Ferreira failed to gather a corner kick. But free-kick specialist Cruz sealed victory 10 minutes from time with another spot kick, lifting his tally of set-piece goals to eight since he joined Sporting three seasons ago.

Porto ended their poor recent run by making the most of an error by the Pacos Ferreira goalkeeper Emilio Pinho. Pinho caught but failed to stop a free-kick by Porto's Brazilian midfielder Deco Sousa in the 42nd minute. Pacos managed to find the Porto net in the final minutes but the goal was disallowed for offside. Benfica extended their run of games without a win to six, drawing 1-1 at home to Maritimo on Saturday. Maritimo went ahead after just 10 minutes with a goal from unmarked Brazilian striker Eric Gauchio, but Angolan forward Pedro Mantomas levelled for Benfica in the 25th. Elsewhere, bottom club Varzim played out a goalless draw with Salgueiros. Gil Vicente beat Farense 3-1 while Belenenses and Santa Clara drew 1-1.



Pacos de Ferreira's Jose Manuel (centre) fights for the ball with FC Porto's Frederick.

Belenenses 1 Santa Clara 1, Varzim 0 Salgueiros 0, Gil Vicente 3 Farense 1, Porto 1 Pacos Ferreira 0, Benfica 1 Maritimo 1, Uniao Leiria 2 Vitoria Guimaraes 1, Beira Mar 1 Sporting 2, Alverca 0 Braga 3, Vitoria Setubal v Boavista (2030 GMT).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sporting	17	11	3	3	38	13	36
Porto	17	10	2	5	29	14	32
Boavista	16	10	2	4	27	12	32
Uniao Leiria	17	8	6	3	30	15	30
Benfica	17	7	8	2	26	18	29
Belenenses	17	8	4	5	25	24	28
Vitoria Guimaraes	17	7	4	6	19	18	25
Braga	17	6	5	6	23	15	23
Maritimo	17	7	2	8	21	20	23
Santa Clara	17	6	5	6	15	20	23
Pacos Ferreira	17	5	6	6	20	26	21
Gil Vicente	17	6	3	8	21	29	21
Salgueiros	17	6	3	8	17	33	21
Beira Mar	17	4	6	7	27	28	18
Vitoria Setubal	16	4	4	8	18	20	16
Alverca	17	4	3	10	19	34	15
Farense	17	4	3	10	12	26	15
Varzim	17	2	5	10	11	33	11

WORLD LEAGUES

IRISH FIRST DIVISION

Bray Wanderers 2 Shamrock Rovers 1, Monaghan 1 Shelbourne 0, Bohemians 1 Derry City 0, St Patricks Athletic 3 Galway United 1, Dundalk 1 University College Dublin 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shelbourne	23	13	4	6	38	21	43
Shamrock Rovers	23	12	5	6	36	20	41
Cork City	22	11	5	6	36	27	38
St Patrick's Athletic	23	13	6	4	41	23	36
Derry City	23	9	8	6	24	16	35
University Col.	23	8	8	7	30	32	32
Bohemians	23	8	7	8	34	25	31
Bray Wanderers	23	8	7	8	36	32	31
Longford Town	22	6	8	8	30	33	26
Dundalk	23	5	9	9	21	33	24
Galway United	23	4	3	16	18	45	15
Monaghan United	23	2	6	15	14	51	12

S. AFRICAN FIRST DIVISION

Free State Stars 1 Black Leopards 1, Mamelodi Sundowns 1 Santos 1, Ria Stars 2 Manning Rangers 4, Umtata Bush Bucks v Orlando Pirates (postponed) Kaizer Chiefs 0 Wits University 0, Lamontville Golden Arrows 2 AmaZulu 0, Moroka Swallows 2 Classic 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Moroka Swallows	16	10	4	2	22	12	34
Black Leopards	17	8	6	3	30	18	30
Orlando Pirates	16	8	5	3	19	12	29
Santos	15	7	6	2	21	12	27
SuperSport United	16	8	3	5	19	19	27
Manning Rangers	15	8	2	5	31	20	26
Jomo Cosmos	15	7	2	6	17	14	23
Wits University	18	5	7	6	15	15	22
Ajax Cape Town	14	6	3	5	14	10	21
Kaizer Chiefs	12	6	2	4	16	16	20
Free State Stars	16	4	6	6	14	14	18
Umtata B. Bucks	16	5	3	8	16	21	18
Mamelodi S'downs	11	4	5	2	10	7	17
Ria Stars	16	4	4	8	18	23	16
Golden Arrows	16	3	7	6	16	20	16
Hellenic	16	3	5	8	10	24	14
AmaZulu	17	2	5	10	9	23	11
Classic	16	0	7	9	10	27	7

WELSH FIRST DIVISION

Aberystwyth 1 Flexsys Cefn Druids 1, Barry Town 0 Caersws 3, Llanelli 2 Oswestry Town 2, Newtown v Cwmbran Town (postponed) Port Talbot 1 Bangor City 0, Rhayader Town v Haverfordwest (postponed) Rhyl 1 Afan Lido 0, TNS Llansantffraid v Carmarthen Town (postponed) Caernarfon Town 2 Connah's Quay 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Llansantffraid	17	10	4	3	37	18	34
Connah's Quay	17	10	3	4	39	28	33
Barry Town	17	9	5	3	39	16	32
Bangor City	17	9	4	4	35	20	31
Caernarfon Town	18	8	5	5	38	33	29
Rhyl	18	9	2	7	27	24	29
Carmarthen Town	16	8	4	4	26	17	28
Cwmbran Town	14	9	0	5	28	17	27
Caersws	17	6	3	8	31	27	21
Aberystwyth Town	14	6	3	5	19	19	21
Afan Lido	16	6	2	8	16	22	20
Newtown	16	4	6	6	20	25	18
Port Talbot	15	5	2	8	20	29	17
Flexsys Druids	17	4	5	8	28	43	17
Llanelli	17	4	4	9	17	25	16
Haverfordwest	15	3	6	6	24	29	15
Oswestry Town	17	4	3	10	19	45	15
Rhayader Town	16	1	3	12	13	39	6

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

After Round 13	TOTAL							PTS	HOME							AWAY						
	P	W	D	L	Bye	F	A		P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A		
PERTH GLORY	12	10	1	1	1	32	12	31	6	6	0	0	16	5	6	4	1	1	16	7		
NEWCASTLE UNITED	12	6	6	0	1	17	9	24	6	4	2	0	8	2	6	2	4	0	9	7		
BRISBANE STRIKERS	12	6	4	2	1	19	13	22	6	3	2	1	8	5	6	3	4	1	11	8		
PARRAMATTA POWER	12	5	3	4	1	15	14	18	6	3	1	2	9	8	6	2	2	2	6	6		
MARCONI STALLIONS	12	5	3	4	1	14	14	18	5	3	1	1	8	6	7	2	2	3	6	8		
OLYMPIC SHARKS	12	5	2	5	1	13	10	17	7	4	2	1	9	3	5	1	0	4	4	5		
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	12	5	1	6	1	15	17	16	5	3	1	2	7	8	6	2	0	4	8	11		
NORTHERN SPIRIT	12	4	3	5	1	18	21	15	6	1	1	4	6	13	6	3	2	1	12	8		
WOLLONGONG WOLVES	12	3	3	6	1	13	21	12	6	2	0	4	5	9	6	1	1	4	7	12		
ADELAIDE CITY	12	2	5	5	1	16	17	11	6	2	3	1	12	7	6	0	2	4	4	10		
SYDNEY UNITED	12	3	2	7	1	10	17	11	6	1	2	3	6	10	6	3	0	3	4	5		
KINGZ FC	12	2	4	6	1	19	30	10	5	2	2	2	8	13	7	0	2	5	11	19		
SOUTH MELBOURNE	12	2	3	7	1	7	13	9	9	2	2	5	7	11	3	0	1	2	0	2		

WOLLONGONG WOLVES

(N Sekulovski 19, S Young 81)

NORTHERN SPIRIT

(P Cardozo 28)

Venue: WIN Stadium. Crowd: 4,018. Referee: B. Hugo.
Cautions: N Spencer (NS) 4'

Teams: **WOLLONGONG WOLVES:** Anastasiadis, Ceccoli, Cervinski, Castro (Wells 86), Reid, Sekulovski, Anthopoulos (Stanton 66), Huxley, Blake, Mennillo, Sharland (Young 70).

NORTHERN SPIRIT: Henderson, Watts, Bell, Spencer, Thomas (Cervinski 83), McDermott, Foster, Cardozo, Cranney, Hutchinson, Griffiths.

KINGZ FC

(G Goutzioulis 53, A Durante og 87)

OLYMPIC SHARKS

(L Wilson 86)

Venue: Ericsson Stadium. Crowd: 3,153. Referee: C. Diomis.
Cautions: M Burton (KFC) 41', A Durante (OS) 63', A Packer (OS) 79'

Teams: **KINGZ FC:** Theoklitos, Perry, Goutzioulis, Urlovic, Vlahos (Miyazawa 87), Ngata, Campbell (Davis 74), Markovski, Burton (Banks 81), Jackson, Douglas.

OLYMPIC SHARKS: Bolton, Kohler (Demourtzidis 87), Wilson, Pondeljak, Halpin, North, Carle, Packer, Durante (Caravella 87), Bosevski (Owens 55), Juric.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK



Michael Theoklitos: The Kingz' heroic and match-winning custodian last Friday night against the Olympic Sharks.

PERTH GLORY

(B Despotovski 19, J Harnwell 42, M Horsley 51, D Mori 83)

BRISBANE STRIKERS

(J Carbone 21, M Baird 47)

Venue: Perth Oval. Crowd: 14,592. Referee: S. Micallef.
Cautions: S Miller (PG) 36'

Teams: **PERTH GLORY:** Petkovic, Horsley, Harnwell, Miller, Maloney, Despotovski, Garcia (Tarka 92), Junior, Mori, Pryce, Naglieri (Faria 79).

BRISBANE STRIKERS: Kearton, Alagich, Stefanutto, Grierson, Rech (Baird 46), Foster, Trajanovski (McKay 66), Carbone (McQuilter 81), Heath, Dreger.

MARCONI STALLIONS

(J Maisano 38)

SOUTH MELBOURNE

Venue: Marconi Stadium. Crowd: 2,982. Referee: M. Breeze.
Cautions: C Bell (SM) 73', N Tolios (SM) 79'

Teams: **MARCONI STALLIONS:** Turnbull, Babic (Beauchamp 75), Costanzo, Longo, Care, Renaud, Maisano, Tome (Radulovic 64), Bozinovski, Webb (Gibson 64), Brosque.

SOUTH MELBOURNE: Petkovic, Iosifidis, De Amicis, Durakovic, Panopoulos, Coveny, Buljan (Petrovic 77), Tolios, Murdocca, Bell (Pace 77), Santilli (Lia 67).

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

PARRAMATTA POWER

(Z Arambasic 40)

Venue: Knights Stadium. Crowd: 3,962. Referee: A. Nardi.
Cautions: P Bennett (PP) 11', D Vasilevski (MK) 20', A Vargas (MK) 23', L Lapsansky (PP) 52'

Teams: **MELBOURNE KNIGHTS:** John, R Vargas, Ognenovski, Horvat, Marth, Vasilevski, Porter (Rajher 88), Sulemani (Debevc 77), Jolic, A Vargas, De Jesus.

PARRAMATTA POWER: Pogliacomi, Barnett, Oric, Tobin, O'Sullivan, Arambasic (Kwasnik 89), Lapsansky, Fitzsimmons (Erich 60), Buonavoglia (Langdon 61), Eagleton, Bennett.

SYDNEY UNITED

(A Milicic 51)

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE

(A Moreira 31)

Venue: Sydney United SC. Crowd: 3,753. Referee: E. Lennie.
Cautions: A Moric (SU) 37', A Kovacevic (ACF) 46'+, M Karlovic (ACF) 53', K Marusic (SU) 56', G Mendez (SU) 86'
Red Cards: A Moric (SU) 72', C Menapi (SU) 82'

Teams: **SYDNEY UNITED:** Knezevic, Arrarte, Marusic (Mendez 56), Moric, Milicic, Deur, Talevski (Cunico 83), Bilokapic, Sinozic, Zelic, Cevenini (Menapi 66)

ADELAIDE CITY: Cagalj (Godley 46), Kemp (Pantelis 60), Fyfe, Kovacevic, Veart, Vidmar, Moreira, Tunbridge, Rees, Goulding, Karlovic (Budin 80).

LEADING GOALSCORERS

Name	Club	Total
DAMIAN MORI	Perth Glory	11
DESPOTOVSKI Bobby	Perth Glory	10
MILICIC Ante	Sydney United	7
CARDOZO Pablo	Northern Spirit	7
FOSTER Paul	Brisbane Strikers	6
RECH Fernando	Brisbane Strikers	6
TUNBRIDGE Scott	Adelaide City Force	6
GRIFFITHS Joel	Newcastle United	6
URLOVIC Paul	Kingz FC	6

ROUND 14

FRIDAY JANUARY 11

Kingz FC vs Brisbane Strikers

Northern Spirit vs Parramatta Power

SATURDAY JANUARY 12

Marconi Stallions vs Wollongong Wolves

Perth Glory vs South Melbourne

SUNDAY JANUARY 13

Melbourne Knights vs Newcastle Utd

Sydney United vs Olympic Sharks

Adelaide City Force vs Bye

BYE — NEWCASTLE UNITED